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Introduction to
Studies in Roman Comedy



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THE INTERPRETATION OF ROMAN COMEDY

BY HENRY W. PRESCOTT

By way of introduction to various studies of technique in Roman comedy I find it convenient to state briefly, with some illustrative examples, the dominant tendencies, as I see them, in the higher criticism of Plautus and Terence, to suggest the weakness of modern method, and to indicate the possibility of a different point of view and of safer courses of procedure. In such an introduction suggestion rather than demonstration, exposition rather than extended argument, are the limited aims of the paper; and I hope that the brevity desirable in prolegomena will not be mistaken for dogmatic assertion.

Modern criticism establishes a norm as characteristic of Hellenistic comedy, and explains deviations from that norm in the Roman adaptations by certain known facts relating to the tradition of our Latin texts and the methods of composition followed by the Roman playwrights. The weakness of modern method may best be indicated by a consideration of the abnormal features—abnormal from the standpoint of modern critics—in several plays of Plautus; for this purpose I have chosen the *Rudens*, the *Persa*, and the *Stichus*. It is not my purpose to prove that the *Rudens* and the *Stichus* are not contaminated, or that the *Persa* is not from a Greek original of the Middle rather than of the New Greek comedy; I wish simply to illustrate from these plays how certain features of dramatic technique are handled by modern critics without due regard to the demands of

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the audience in the theater, to the limitations set by the scenic background and the traditions of the literary type, to the restrictions which hamper the poet once he has sketched the main outline of his plot. In describing, therefore, the supposed abnormal features I shall briefly suggest the internal or external necessity which, in my opinion, made them inevitable in the Greek original; in this case they may not be explained as Roman defects due to contamination or retraction; and they conflict with a theory of artistic regularity in Hellenistic comedy which modern critics believe to have been induced through the influence of Euripides.

The *Rudens* of Plautus is not conspicuously unlike other Roman comedies. It is, however, a diffuse play. Some of this diffuseness, as the *licet*- and *censeo*-scenes near the end of the play perhaps attest, may be Plautus' contribution. But it is equally clear that no small amount of it is inherent in the Greek plot. A girl and her maid, carried off by a slave-dealer and his accomplice, are shipwrecked; the discovery of this girl's status as a free citizen must be established by tokens which she has lost in the storm at sea; these tokens must be found at a relatively late stage in the action by a neutral or friendly person, or group of persons; of those shipwrecked with her none is friendly save the maidservant, and as this servant is needed for various dramatic and economic effects in the earlier scenes of the play, before the recognition can take place, the dramatist may not use her to bring about the recovery of the tokens. It follows inevitably that an outside person, apart from the victims of the shipwreck, must accomplish the recovery; for this purpose a fisherman, Gripus, is invented, whose activity in the Roman play is limited to the latter half of the comedy. In the earlier action another slave, Scepharnio, served to connect minor chapters, to furnish some amusing effects; he now disappears; his function is completed; he was not available for the discovery of the tokens; Gripus, essential to the recognition theme, becomes prominent in the last two acts of the comedy.

Under these compelling circumstances a modern dramatist might make Gripus, if not thoroughly organic, at least less mechanically related to the action than the fisherman is in the Roman play. A playwright today, for example, might put in the mouth of *Daemones*,

the master of Gripus, in some of the opening scenes of the play, a casual remark to the effect that Gripus has gone out fishing, and that he wonders how the slave has fared during the storm; thus the audience would be duly prepared for the advent of the fisherman in later scenes. But in the extant play this casual remark, instead of being introduced early in the action is very mechanically brought in at vss. 897 ff. and immediately before Gripus' entrance; *Daemones* is very obviously lugged on the stage and haled off it (vss. 892-905) merely to provide this introduction of Gripus, with whom the previous action has not made the audience acquainted.

Now the removal of *Sceparnio* from the action, and the mechanical appending of Gripus for the purposes of the recognition theme, may well suggest that Plautus has combined parts of two distinct Greek plays;¹ and vss. 892-905, in which *Daemones* is so inartistically brought on and removed, may be Plautus' clumsy gluing of alien elements. But before any such supposition may become established fact or well-reasoned theory one must reckon with the situation that confronted the author of the Greek original; even the Greek author of the first three acts of the present play had to invent a character corresponding to Gripus. Once invented, it was difficult, in the nature of the plot, to make him an organic character; his connection with the main action, when he was first introduced, had to be loose; the mechanical introduction of Gripus in vss. 892-905 is indispensable to the needs of the audience, Greek as well as Roman, and, so far as it is mechanical, accords with frequent practice observable as early as Greek tragedy and Aristophanes.² Broadly stated, one is not

¹ So Miss Coulter, *Class. Phil.*, VIII, 57 ff., and cf. the references *ibid.*, 57, n. 4.

² The mechanical introduction of characters appears in the formulaic *καὶ μὴν ὁρῶ* (commoner in tragedy than in Aristophanes) and *ecce . . . video* with great frequency. Apart from the variations of this formula, note the obvious self-introduction of the parasite in *Bacch.* 573, and the patent address to the audience in *Poen.* 203-4, where both the young women are known to the characters on the stage and *haec est prior* carefully distinguishes the one from the other for the benefit of the spectators. The phraseology of introduction has been considered by W. Koch, *De personarum comicarum introductione*, Breslau, 1914; for incidental comment cf. Fraenkel, *De media et nova comoedia qu. sel.*, Göttingen, 1912, p. 59; Graeber, *De poet. Attic. arte scaenica*, Göttingen, 1911, p. 19; Flickinger, *Class. Jour.*, X, 207 ff. A study of introductions, as a phase of the technique of comedy, will shortly appear, I hope, by Mr. D. M. Key, of the University of Chicago. It will be observed that the postponement of the introduction in the *Rudens* to vss. 897 ff. immediately before Gripus' appearance may be a concession to the needs of an audience that is not provided with playbills.

likely to appreciate properly these supposedly abnormal features of the *Rudens* until he has fully considered in all the Latin plays, in the remains of Greek comedy, even in Greek tragedy, the conditions under which inorganic or loosely attached characters are employed in the drama, and the means by which such characters are related to the action. A study of inorganic rôles would reveal differences in degree, broad resemblance in kind; possibly a difference of degree in Gripus' case might confirm a theory of contamination; but safe conclusions can be based only upon a comprehensive study of the entire phenomenon, not upon casual observation of Gripus' rôle in the *Rudens*.

The *Persa* of Plautus is more obviously irregular than the *Rudens*. Operating with the same factors, largely, as do the students of contamination and retractation, but employing them to bring the date of the Greek original as near as possible to the time of Aristophanes and Euripides, Wilamowitz¹ has proved to the satisfaction of most modern students of comedy that the Greek model was a play of the Middle, not of the New, period. His argument from historical allusions is not relevant to my purpose; only his attitude toward supposed peculiarities of structure and character-treatment illustrates the tendencies of modern method which I am examining.

The play is primarily a slaves' play: a slave, plenipotentiary in his master's absence, intrigues against a slave-dealer; the slave-dealer owns the slave's sweetheart, a slave-girl; a second slave co-operates with the lover; a third slave, Paegnium, a *puer delicatus*, is loosely attached to the action to provide the comic byplay which relieves the general seriousness of the plot of intrigue. This general atmosphere of slaves temporarily liberated for the free exercise of their jovial and malicious propensities is very happily accentuated and preserved in the carousal which as an afterpiece follows the plot of intrigue elaborated in the first four acts; at this carousal the three slaves and the slave-girl sweetheart join in a triumphant convivial celebration in which the utter discomfiture of the slave-dealer reaches its culmination.

But the demands of the intrigue require two free citizens—a parasite and his daughter; for the plot involves the palming off

¹ *De tribus carminibus latinis* (Index lect., Göttingen, 1893-94), 13 ff.

upon the slave-dealer of a free woman as a slave. This pseudo-slave is to be ultimately claimed by her father, and the slave-dealer thereby put in jeopardy. The dramatist, in choosing a parasite and his daughter, has selected characters from the very lowest status of free citizenship, to that extent not entirely out of harmony with the servile status of the main characters, but as free citizens mildly disturbing the unity of atmosphere. This disturbing element is removed as soon as its necessary function in the intrigue is performed; they are needed only for the intrigue, and their activity accordingly ceases when the trick is played.

This mere statement of the poet's design, so far as realization may reveal the underlying purpose, should, in my opinion, meet sufficiently the objections of many modern critics.¹ They are disposed to insist that the parasite, who has been lured into active co-operation by the mention of appetizing foods and promises of perpetual feasts (vss. 140, 329 ff.), should be present at the concluding carousal. But clearly in the *Persa*, as in the carousal at the end of the *Stichus*, the presence of a free citizen would disturb the unity of a celebration designed to commemorate the emancipation, for the moment, of a group of slaves. The ancient audience was left to imagine that the parasite obtained his promised reward without dramatic realization of the feast that he had earned.²

¹ Wilamowitz, *op. cit.*, 20 ff.; Meyer, "De Plauti *Persa*," *Comm. phil. Ienenses*, VIII, fasc. 1, 179 ff.; Miss Coulter, "Retractatio in the Ambrosian and Palatine Recensions of Plautus," *Bryn Mawr College Monographs*, X, 39 ff.

² Economic factors are often disregarded in modern criticism: the addition of the parasite to the final carousal would, perhaps, increase the number of actors required for the production of the play. Wilamowitz' distribution of rôles (*op. cit.*, 25 ff.) is not flawless: he has not provided for Sophoclidisca; and his division rests on the tacit presupposition that a vacant stage often marks an essential pause in Roman comedy (against which cf. Conrad, *The Technique of Continuous Action in Roman Comedy*, 1915); if the action is continuous at vss. 52 and 328, Sagaristio and Saturio may not be played by the same actor. The last two scenes show that at least five actors were required; the general structure indicates that the three heavy rôles of Toxilus, Dordalus, and Sagaristio each required a single actor; there remain five rôles, four of which are female or quasi-female (Paegnium) rôles, that might be distributed among two or three actors; the same actor might play Paegnium and the *virgo*; another actor might play Lemniselenis and Sophoclidisca (for, even if vs. 179 be assigned to the former, she need not have appeared on the stage); the only question is whether the parasite fell to a sixth actor (in which case he might have appeared in the carousal without increasing the number of the troupe), or was added to the parts played by the actor who carried the rôles of Lemniselenis and Sophoclidisca. Against the second

Wilamowitz is too familiar with the general weakness of comedy in respect to motivation¹ to lay much stress upon the defects in this regard of the amusing scenes in which the slave-boy, Paegnium, early in the play, is brought on the stage and elaborately presented to us in stationary lyrical scenes. The errands upon which Paegnium and the slave-woman, Sophoclidisca, are sent are quite futile, and serve simply as weak excuses for getting them upon the stage to amuse the audience and to lessen the seriousness of the more essential action.

Yet the general indifference of the comic poets to motivation does not prevent Wilamowitz and others² from finding serious defects in another shorter passage of the play in which the weakness of motivation is the most significant feature (as in the passage of the *Rudens*, vss. 892-905, discussed above). The intrigue in the *Persa* is completed in two chapters: in one, the arch-intriguer purchases his sweetheart from the slave-dealer with money borrowed from his fellow-slave; in the other (incidentally, to repay the borrowed money) he tricks the slave-dealer into purchasing the parasite's daughter, a free woman, but represented to be a Persian captive. The dramatic effect is enhanced by carrying out both chapters in uninterrupted succession, and the arch-intriguer remains on the stage dominating the situation (as, to a greater degree, in the intrigue of the *Mostellaria*) through both chapters (vss. 449-737). The parasite, who is needed only for the dénouement of the second chapter, in which he must appear and claim his daughter as a free citizen, is introduced to us before the beginning of the entire intrigue (vss. 329 ff.) and withdraws to the house of the arch-intriguer (vs. 399), where he remains in hiding

alternative stands the lack of harmony between the rôles of the parasite and the two women; in favor of it, stands the resultant economy and the structure of the play at vss. 305, 329, 752, 763; it may be that Sophoclidisca leaves at vs. 305 to assume the rôle of the parasite at vs. 329, and that the parasite leaves at vs. 752 to appear as Lemnisiensis at vs. 763.

¹ *Op. cit.*, 22: "et intrant et exeunt personae plerumque soli poetae arbitrio obsecutae, sin vero causam abeundi proferunt, ipso silentio peior est . . .," and in his commentary on Euripides' *Herakles*, vs. 701: "es gehört zum Stile des griechischen Schauspiels, die Motivierung des Gleichgültigen zu verschmähnen, und zum Wesen des antiken Publikums, Adiaphora als solche hinzunehmen und sich bei ihnen nicht aufzuhalten." Yet these interesting generalizations should be tested in careful studies of motivation in tragedy and comedy; cf. below, p. 144, n. 1.

² Wilamowitz, *op. cit.*, 21; Goetz, *Acta soc. phil. Lips.*, VI, 300 ff.; Meyer, *op. cit.*, 172 ff.; Miss Coulter, *Retractatio in . . . Plautus*, 38.

during the whole of the first chapter and the greater part of the second. Thus for over 300 verses (vss. 399-726) he is entirely lost to view, and the scenic background, if he is within the house, provides no means for his observing the earlier progress of the intrigue and knowing when the time for his own activity approaches. The audience, too, may well have lost track of him in such a long interval; certainly he himself must in some way be informed that the time for his arrival on the scene has come. With this dramatic problem before him the poet—and I must insist that the Greek poet confronted the same problem—devised the very mechanical action at vss. 711-30. The slave-dealer must be removed while the parasite is brought on and admonished; unable to remove the slave-dealer artistically, now that the threads of the action are pretty well spun out, the poet simply drags him off at vs. 723, leaving the parasite's daughter on the stage (naturally the slave-dealer would have taken her with him into the house) because she is needed in the subsequent action, and as mechanically dragging him back again at vs. 731 (so *Daemones* was dragged on and off at *Rudens* vss. 892-905). These much-discussed verses (vss. 711-30), therefore, are the dramatist's way of solving his practical difficulties; and those difficulties inhered in the Greek plot. Yet modern critics are so impressed by the obvious mechanism and general weakness of technique that they ascribe the supposed abnormalities to the botchwork of a later retractor, or insist that Plautus must have made over, at this point in the play, a Greek plot which, in its legal aspects, conflicted with Roman procedure.¹ My own view is that the technique, however awkward, is explained so soon as we put ourselves in the place of the poet and the audience, and the Greek as well as Roman poet and audience.

¹ A legal expert (Partsch, *Hermes*, 45, 613) is not convinced by Wilamowitz' argument in this connection, and a layman finds it hard to believe that Dordalus is technically guilty under the circumstances. Is not the slave-dealer in jeopardy more because of a general prejudice against his class than because of any technical liability? As my colleague, Professor Bonner, suggests, without being technically guilty Dordalus would be embarrassed by legal action, and that situation suffices for dramatic purposes and makes unnecessary the precise legal procedure which Wilamowitz posits as determining the action in the Greek original. The fact that vss. 727-28 repeat vss. 467-68 is a textual problem; in both places an accomplice is warned of his approaching activity in the intrigue, and both couplets may illustrate only Plautus' fondness for repeating himself (cf. Kellermann, "*De Plauto sui imitatore*," *Comm. phil. Ienenses*, VII, fasc. 1, 155, note on *Persa* 2).

Rarely does modern criticism find in the portrayal of character any idiosyncrasy; but the peculiarities of the *virgo* in the *Persa* are used to support a view that the Greek original was specially exposed to the influence of the tragic poet, Euripides; the argument illustrates the strength, in the minds of modern critics, of what I shall in later discussion call the presupposition underlying the modern interpretation of Hellenistic and Roman comedy.

The characters of Roman comedy consist of stereotyped representatives of various trades and professions and slightly individualized domestic characters; they are in general realistic, but the realism of the portraiture is often modified under the stress of literary tradition or by immediate dramatic convenience. The choice of characters is determined by the inner necessities of the plot; in some instances external conditions seriously affect the selection. So, for example, the social conventions of Athenian life, combined with the rigidity of the scenic setting, which put the action of the plays in a public street and made interior scenes difficult, tend to eliminate from the comedies the respectable unmarried woman. The *Persa* is unique in its presentation of a *virgo* in an active rôle.

Now this abnormal feature might well excite surprise, and lead any reader to recall the heroines of Euripidean tragedy, were it not that the unique character is immediately explained by the conditions of the plot. The plot of the *Persa*, as we have seen, requires a free and unmarried woman who shall be palmed off as a slave; no woman of the higher grades of Athenian society would lend herself to such a purpose; the dramatist chooses one from the dregs of society, and even she demurs to the task imposed upon her. Under these circumstances, if the portrayal of character in comedy is primarily realistic, we should certainly expect to find in the parasite's daughter a person totally unlike any other woman in the pages of comedy. What parasites' daughters were in contemporary society we have no means of knowing, but the general conditions of life and social custom as they affected women in the status of free citizenship would point to a limited horizon, a very narrow outlook upon life and its problems, especially before marriage.¹

¹ Cf. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens*, 71 ff., for the difference between the cities of Greece proper and those of the outside Greek world in this respect.

In noting in some detail the talk and behavior of the *virgo* we should remember that in the second of the two scenes in which she appears she has been taught a part (vss. 379-81). Such inconsistency as may be apparent between her seriousness in the first scene and her cleverness and apt repartee in the second is thereby explained: "necessitate me mala ut fiam facis" (vs. 382); even apart from this reasonable explanation of the slight contradiction, any dramatist in Hellenistic comedy is prone to abandon consistency of character if the immediate needs of the action are consequently advanced.¹

In the first scene (vss. 329 ff.), in language and manner strange to the reader of New comedy, who has become familiar largely with mercenary courtesans or irate wives, the *virgo* protests against the use which her father purposes to make of her. He is selling her to fill his belly (vss. 336-38); though poor, they should better preserve their good name than become rich at the expense of their reputation (vss. 344 ff.); Mrs. Grundy is a dangerous enemy (vss. 351 ff.). Her father retorts that his own appetite is the first consideration, and that the sale is not a real one; but she does not like even the pretense (vss. 357 ff.). The parasite resents wisdom in a daughter, and regards it as a weakness of her sex; the only weakness, she replies, is in letting evil action go unnoticed (vss. 365-70). She yields only to his authority as father, and points out that if the family gets a bad name her marriage will be difficult to arrange. The parasite, however, with a thrust at the evil times, declares that a dowry, not a good name, counts in marriage; and, reminded by her of his poverty, he finds in his stock of funny stories incalculable wealth sufficient to achieve her marriage even with a beggar (vss. 383 ff.).

In the second scene (vss. 549 ff.) she carries out her part in the trick with amazing cleverness. She comes on with a slave who poses as her attendant envoy from Persia; the two pseudo-foreigners are engaged in conversation as they enter. The attendant inquires whether she is not impressed by the splendor of Athens; she replies that she has seen only the external beauty of the town; the character of its citizens is still unknown to her, and she withholds judgment;

¹ Cf. Legrand, *Daos*, 309.

like a street-preacher delivering a diatribe she moralizes, lists ten deadly sins,¹ and declares a single wall to be a sufficient state of preparedness if the citizens are innocent of these sins, but a hundred-fold wall to be insufficient if a town is corrupted by such vices. The slave-dealer, considering the possibility of purchasing her, quizzes the *virgo*; her answers are ingenious; they satisfy the purchaser without committing her or her accomplices; she misrepresents her actual condition as daughter of the parasite in only one respect: she refers to herself as a slave, but otherwise every response fits her real situation as the parasite's daughter, with no little wit at the expense of the parasite for the audience to enjoy. She expects her parents to redeem her but does not object to a brief period of slavery (vss. 615 ff.); yet she weeps over her temporary plight. Dordalus inquires her name; it is Lucris, an auspicious name from his standpoint. Where was she born? Her mother told her "in a corner of the kitchen." Reminded that he means in what country was she born, she insists that she is without a country except that country where she happens to be; the past is gone (vss. 630-38); and pressed for an answer she contends that Athens must now be her country (vs. 641). Was her father a captive? No, not a captive, but he lost what he had. What is his name? His name is Miser and hers Misera.² What is his social standing? Everybody likes him, slaves and freemen, and she warns the slave-dealer that her father will ransom her, his friends will stand by him, even if he has lost his property. The slave-dealer is completely won over, of course too easily; the comic intrigue regularly represents the object of the intrigue as a gullible fool.

The entertainment and the dramatic effects afforded by the *virgo* are admirable, of their kind; in the first scene her modesty and idealism are in amusing contrast with the coarse practical wisdom of her father; and in the second scene she is contrasted implicitly

¹ If both passages come from the Greek originals of the two plays, anybody who is seeking the date of the Greek model of the *Persa* might well note that the ten *sodales* of *Persa* 561 are matched by the *sodales* of *Merc.* 845 (six in 845, ten in 848-49).

² Wilamowitz (*op. cit.*, 25) finds a Euripidean background in the answer of Orestes, when he is asked his name, in *Iph.* 500: τὸ μὲν δίκαιον δυστυχεῖς καλούμεθ' ἄν. Certainly the diction may be an echo of Euripidean phraseology, but the general idea in "nunc et illum Miseram et me Miseram aequom est nominarier" is on the same plane with Gelasimus' "Famem ego fuisse suspicor matrem mihi" (*Stich.* 155).

with the slave-dealer, at whom her moralizing deals some sharp thrusts. The serious-mindedness which is her permanent characteristic is sustained, with advantage to the intrigue, in the second scene; her quick wit is perhaps foisted upon her to some extent by the dramatist for his immediate needs. The serious-mindedness, the moralizing, are the qualities of her class, affected by the secluded life of unmarried women in contemporary society; doubtless they are exaggerated for dramatic purposes, as are the qualities of the cook, the soldier, the courtesan, in comedy; but why need we turn to the tragic heroines of Euripides, rather than to real life, for an explanation of the *virgo*? Must she be a tragic heroine simply because she is serious-minded? And where in Euripides is such sustained prudishness to be found in the tragic heroine? The individual sentiments, to be sure, in content and phrasing may be like the sententiousness of Euripidean characters, but the influence of the tragic poet upon diction and style is pervasive throughout the Hellenistic period; the style of individual *sententiae* is hardly different from those that occur in the *Mercator* and *Trinummus*.¹

In brief, the inner necessity of the plot makes the *virgo* indispensable. Her essential features are those of the *virgo*, probably, in contemporary life, with some exaggeration; and though the character is required by the Greek plot, we must grant in this case the possibility that Plautus expanded suggestions in his Greek original with a view to portraying a staid Roman virgin from his own environment.²

¹ Cf. Leo, *Plaut. Forsch.*, 136.

² It is hardly fair to Wilamowitz to separate his confessedly weak arguments based on the technique of the *Persa* from the pivotal point of his discussion, but I wish simply to use the material to illustrate the general attitude of modern critics toward various phases of dramatic form in Roman comedy. On his main point, that vs. 506 presupposes an independent kingdom of Persia and dates the Greek original before 338 B.C., I may say that not merely the fictitious nature of the situation but the purely fabulous "Goldtown" which the Persians capture suggest to me a Utopian Eldorado rather than any accurate reference to contemporary history. I sympathize with the views of Meyer, *op. cit.*, 183 ff. (but not with his argument, *ibid.*, 186 ff.).

The logical relation of Leo's note on Diogenes (*Hermes*, 41, 441 ff.) to the argument of Wilamowitz should be thoroughly understood. Leo says that if Wilamowitz has proved his case, vs. 123 is a specific reference to Diogenes. On the other hand, it should be clear that if Wilamowitz has not proved his case, Leo's evidence, which is largely from Leonidas of Tarentum, probably a younger contemporary of Menander, would only establish the fact that at the time of the New comedy the equipment ascribed to the Cynic in vss. 123 ff. was attributed to Diogenes and other members of the school.

Leo's masterly analysis of the *Stichus*¹ has doubtless convinced many students of comedy. Certainly the extraordinary structure of the piece may be satisfactorily explained as a combination of parts of three Greek plays; these three parts might be called "The Faithful Penelopes," "The Discomfiture of the Parasite," "The Slaves' Carousal." The Roman play mechanically joins these alien elements by attaching to the first part a parasite, whose hopes of a dinner are twice frustrated in the second chapter, and to the second part a slave, Stichus, who arranges the revel with which, as in the *Persa*, the play concludes. That the parasite and the slave are inorganic rôles, that the play as a whole completely disregards unity of persons, are incontestable facts. The only question is whether such structure is inevitably Roman and Plautine. The modern critic denies that a Greek author, and particularly Menander, to whom a didascalie notice attributes the Greek original, was capable of this artless mechanism.²

There is only one fact in Leo's analysis which I should qualify. Leo maintains not only that the first appearance of the parasite, Gelasimus, is not motivated (vss. 155 ff.), but that his appearance before the houses of the brothers is in flat contradiction of an essential presupposition of the plot. Of course my own main contention is that it is idle to deal with the matter of motivation until this aspect of dramatic technique in its entirety has been properly studied, not only in comedy, but in tragedy. Accepting, however, for the

¹ Cf. *Nachr. d. götting. Gesellschaft* (1902), 375 ff.

² "Menander und Plautus schreiben beide für die Bühne, aber Menander aus einer grossen Kunstentwicklung heraus, Plautus für die kürzlich entwickelte Bühnenbedürfniss eines kunstfremden Publikums; ihm darf man die Umgestaltung Menanders auf gröbere Bühnenwirkung hin nach der Lage der Dinge wohl zutrauen" (*op. cit.*, 377). "Was die Form angeht, so liegt Menanders strenge und konsequente Kunst vor Augen; sie vor allem gibt den Massstab für die Treue der römischen Bearbeitungen" (*Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 108). Such statements illustrate the broad vision of the critic, and if limited to Menander may be sound generalization. But the question arises whether the absolute uniformity of art here attributed to Menander may not have been violated, in at least one play, by an author who left over 100 comedies; modern critics seem to forget the enormous productivity of the comic poets in the Hellenistic period; how complete regularity may we expect in authors like Antiphanes, credited with 260 plays, Alexis with 245, Philemon with 97? Furthermore, in his critical studies of comedy Leo seems to regard *all* the Greek writers of comedy in the New period as issuing from a great "Kunstentwicklung," for clearly whatever is not "Kunst" in Plautus is, in Leo's theory, Roman.

moment Leo's standpoint, I should say that the implicit motivation of the parasite's appearance is strong.

The presupposition in question was not known to the audience at vs. 155, when Gelasimus first appears, unless it had been clearly stated in a prologue now lost to us. A modern reader has to reconstruct from vss. 214, 267, 372, 462, 584, 628, a very important fact: from these verses it is clear that the two brothers had been forced into their triennium of foreign travel by previous riotous living under the efficient guidance of the parasite; their commercial activity is an attempt to recoup their lost fortunes; the relations, therefore, between the parasite and the households of the two brothers are far from friendly during the action of the play. During the triennium the parasite has never been entertained at the homes of the brothers, and he is surprised that he, of all persons, should be selected as the messenger of one of the sisters and sent to the harbor for news of the absent husbands (vss. 266-68). Under these circumstances it is even more surprising that without any explicit reason he should voluntarily appear before the houses of the brothers at vs. 155; he arrives before the servant, Crocotium, can fetch him; and the futility, from a dramatic standpoint, of his function as messenger is immediately clear when in the next scene the news is actually brought by Paegnium, permanently stationed by the sisters as a lookout at the harbor. It is obvious that the author, Greek or Roman, wanted Gelasimus on the stage at this place and time, and lugged him on without any artistic manipulation of circumstances. Yet, if we are to regard motivation as essential in the dramatic art of the Greeks and Romans, I should suggest that the monologue of Gelasimus at vss. 155 ff. sufficiently explains his presence: he is reduced to starvation, and forced to sell all his scanty property; under these conditions where should he more naturally appear, as a last resort, than at the houses of the two brothers, where, in his palmy days, he had been a welcome visitor?

But this fact is merely implied, and I have no reason to question Leo's general conclusion that the handling of the situation is absolutely mechanical; both Gelasimus and Stichus are loosely attached to the action; they are in different degrees inorganic characters; and it may be remarked, in passing, that in only a slightly less degree

the parasite, Ergasilus, in the *Captivi*, from a comparison with whom Leo draws such important conclusions, is an inorganic character.¹

The reason for the existence of these two inorganic rôles (and the weakness, consequently, of Leo's entire theory that three Greek plays furnished the three chapters of the *Stichus*) is immediately apparent just so soon as we put ourselves in the place of a playwright who had devised the broad exposition of the first two scenes (vss. 1-154) as a complete introduction of a Greek play. For Leo admits that this exposition, with its contrast between the two loyal wives, and the further contrast between the two Penelopes and their father, is thoroughly Menandrian; nor is it demonstrably incomplete; he admits, too, that of the three Greek plays which he posits as furnishing the three chapters of the *Stichus* he can construct the plots of the last two but is absolutely unable to think out to the end the Greek play from which came the Menandrian exposition of the *Stichus*. Can there be any other conclusion, unless Menander's imagination was more fertile than Leo's, than that Menander himself, having constructed the exposition which we find in the *Stichus*, would be forced to develop inorganic characters and a relatively inorganic play as the result of such an exposition?

Given, as the exposition, two loyal wives separated from their husbands for a triennium, and urged by a practical father to assume that their husbands are lost to them and to marry again without further delay, what dramatic action can develop when these two husbands return and become reconciled to their wives and father-in-law? Leo is much disturbed that no visible reconciliation takes place, that the elaborateness of the exposition is not justified by any subsequent action; the sisters do not appear on the stage again after the exposition; the reunion of husbands and wives takes place off-stage; the reconciliation with the father-in-law is stated in the case of one brother, more visibly presented in the case

¹ For, however well explained his presence in the opening scene before Hegio's house, the relation of Ergasilus to the main action of the *Captivi* is so loose that Ladewig and Herzog long since suggested contamination or Plautine invention to account for the inorganic rôle; these suggestions have been long discarded; yet the difference between Ergasilus and Gelasimus is one of degree rather than of kind. The degree may be important, but its importance can be estimated only after a complete study of inorganic rôles in comedy, not after a casual comparison of the two parasites in the *Captivi* and the *Stichus*.

of the second. In brief, though all the facts of Leo's analysis might harmonize with the conclusion that the *Stichus* is a composite of three Greek plays, it is equally clear that the Menandrian exposition, if complete, would compel the Greek author to attach a character like the parasite to the first chapter of the action in order to provide the action of the second chapter, and if so trivial a character as Gelasimus were invented, nothing remained but the invention of a second inorganic character like *Stichus*¹ to give the play the requisite length, however much the unity of persons is thereby disrupted. There is nothing inevitable in Leo's conclusions; and if papyri from Egypt should ever confirm his conclusions, would it not be a tribute to his intuition rather than to the soundness of his argument?

Again, however, we are not interested primarily in the theory of contamination. Here, as in other plays, the critic has isolated as peculiar features of a single play certain supposed weaknesses; they are defects in motivation of entrance, in the organic relation of characters to action, and of exposition to subsequent dramatic development. Leo, to be sure, compares and contrasts the parasites of the *Stichus* and of the *Captivi*; but he had no complete study of any one of these three aspects of dramatic technique upon which to base sound conclusions. May I suggest, if only again by a single parallel instance, the need of less casual procedure in the handling of the technique of comedy?

A very important item in Leo's argument is the wastefulness, in the present text of the Roman play, of the admirable exposition, both of the general situation and of the characters, in the opening scenes of the *Stichus*. Quite apart from my suggestion that this apparently useless introduction and the inorganic action that follows are explained by the conditions of the exposition itself, there is clear evidence that the lack of close organic connection between exposition and main action is not peculiar to the *Stichus*, and is demonstrably Greek rather than Roman in its broad aspects.

¹ The mechanical inlay which Leo finds at vss. 419-53 and attributes to Plautus' efforts to attach *Stichus* to the action of the play might have been better in the original. If *Stichus* was really part of Menander's *Adelphoe*, the passage vss. 435-53 (vss. 446 ff. reveal Plautus' hand) may be a substitute for a lyrical intermezzo by the music girls (*hasce* 418) in the Greek play; or so at least I should expect the many searchers after survivals of the Menandrian chorus in Roman comedy to suggest.

The *Mostellaria* of Plautus, from the Greek of Philemon, is admitted by Leo¹ to be thoroughly Greek in all essential features of the action; nor does he contend that any of the exposition is Plautine save the solo-song of Philolaches, which, he thinks, in the Greek original appeared as a monologue; of contamination the play is as innocent as any Roman comedy can be. The four introductory scenes of the play constitute the most elaborate exposition in extant comedy: in the first scene two slaves in dialogue reveal the general situation—the riotous life of a son under the direction of a slave in the father's absence; in the second, the son himself in song reveals his weakness of character; in the third, the young man's slave-girl sweetheart, now liberated with borrowed money, is sharply contrasted with an old beldam, her servant, and the effect is admirably portrayed in the changing moods of the eavesdropping lover; a fourth scene provides the general atmosphere of the whole situation—a boon companion and his sweetheart join the other pair of lovers in a brief, broadly humorous, lyrical intermezzo. Yet after this extended exposition of character as well as of situation the persons introduced to us in these scenes practically disappear for the rest of the action; Tranio, one of the slaves in the first scene, does become the arch-intriguer and dominates the later action, but the lover and his sweetheart, whose characters have been so fully delineated, are removed from the stage, and the subordinate boon companion, briefly presented in the fourth scene and at the beginning of the main action, is merely lugged on at the end of the play as a *homo ex machina* to cut the knot. The removal of the hero and the heroine, as we suppose them to be from the exposition, is cleverly devised; in the *Stichus* the wives are removed from the action only by the dramatic necessity, by the impracticability of developing dramatic action through their presence. But I should be disposed to assert that these expositions of two different plays supported a view that two Greek poets, Menander and Philemon, were so interested in character *per se* that they disregarded close interrelation of exposition and main action to indulge in the portrayal of persons essential to the situation but irrelevant to the subsequent action.

¹ Leo, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 110 ff.

As my choice of illustrations indicates, I am concerned only with those general aspects of the form of Roman comedy from which modern critics obtain their notions of the relation of Plautus and Terence to their Greek originals; these critics are intent upon the obvious and laudable task of reconstructing the history of ancient comedy, and of placing, not only Plautus and Terence, but the Greek authors whom these Roman playwrights translated, in their proper historical relation to one another and to antecedent comedy.

The problem that confronts these modern scholars, who, in view of the fragmentary remains of Hellenistic comedy, may well seem ambitious in their aims, is a difficult one. The plays of Aristophanes present an incoherent satirical burlesque, provided with a chorus as an organic part of at least the first part of the play, and lampooning public men, public policy, and the general trend of ideas and customs in contemporary Athens—a local product, instinct with the life of the Greek metropolis of the fifth century. The comedy of the Hellenistic period exists only in fragmentary form, through which the content is only vaguely discernible, the structure even more difficult to determine. The 26 Roman plays adapted from this Hellenistic comedy present a coherent drama of private life, of sentiment, and of intrigue, without a chorus, in which a generalized picture of contemporary society has replaced the fantastic treatment of local problems. How are these two diverse types of comedy related to each other, if related at all?

Ancient theory, expressed in a number of Byzantine documents, and perpetuating with later accretions academic opinion that may in some respects be as old as the school of Aristotle,¹ solved this question by the assertion that financial pressure led to the elimination of the chorus in Old comedy, that political conditions made impracticable the open criticism of men and events, the implication being that these two causes suffice to explain the development of an incoherent satirical burlesque into a well-organized realistic comedy of manners.

Making all allowance for the facts, that in some plays of Aristophanes the chorus falls into the background or almost completely disappears, that relative unity is occasionally discoverable even in

¹ Kaibel, "Die Prolegomena ΠΕΡΙ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΑΣ," *Abhandl. götting. Gesell.*, II/4 (1898).

plays in which the chorus is prominent, that in his latest plays Aristophanes made use of sentimental legend in which the exposure of a child and its recognition were essential features, modern criticism, with some reason, refuses to admit that ancient theory satisfactorily accounts for the sharp contrast in both form and content between Aristophanic plays and the extant comedies of Plautus and Terence. It asserts as an incontrovertible fact¹ that at the turn of the fifth century the younger Greek tragedy, represented chiefly by Euripides, exerted a potent influence upon the form and content of comedy, which, once the chorus was removed, took over the coherent structure of Euripidean tragedy and perpetuated without impediment the ideals that the tragic poet, hampered by the conventions of his literary type, could only faintly realize. Euripides, yearning to portray realistically contemporary life, must content himself with making of the demigod Orestes a very ordinary human being; Hellenistic comedy, free from the restrictions of tragedy, and relieved of the chorus as an organic element, easily conformed to a demand for realistic portrayal of private life and attained artistic unity. Roman comedy, therefore, reflecting the Euripidean form of Hellenistic models, reveals a serious framework of well-knit action, with comical appurtenances, and a happy issue; its artistic unity and much of its content are an inheritance from Euripidean art.

The features of Roman comedy which establish this fundamental presupposition are briefly these:² The plays are serious, the comic elements often detachable; remove the parasite from the *Captivi*, change the issue, a tragedy results. The emotions exhibited and excited by Roman comedy are, mainly, those proper to tragedy rather than comedy. The plot of intrigue is anticipated in several plays of Euripides. The exposure of children at birth and their later recognition is a tragic theme and situation. The intimate life and the domestic characters have little or no background in Aristophanes but are suggested in the tendencies of Euripides which Aristophanes delighted to ridicule. The plays of Euripides, in which the chorus is

¹ Leo, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 100 ff.

² *Ibid.*, I, 104 ff. For a comprehensive statement of the case from the standpoint of the historian of Greek literature cf. Christ-Schmid, *Gesch. d. griech. Lit.*, II/1⁶, 26 ff. References on the details are deferred to the fuller discussion of the theory in a subsequent paper.

often somewhat detachable, fall into six or seven coherent chapters, separated by choral songs; modern critics enjoy finding in the vacant stages of Roman comedy the deserted abodes of a tragic chorus, these empty spaces setting off well-defined chapters of action and distinguishing a general unity of form.¹ The most conspicuous feature of the technique of Roman comedy is solo-speech and solo-song; Euripides not only extensively cultivated solo-song by the actors, but more conspicuously than the other tragedians resents the impediment of the chorus, and on occasion puts in the mouth of a character a quasi-soliloquy in spite of the presence of the chorus, or rarely removes the chorus and resorts to monologue. Of these solo-speeches in comedy the prologues of many plays of Plautus, both in the style in which they set forth the plot and in respect to the characters in whose mouths they are put, are Euripidean. Aside from these essential elements of form and content Roman comedy in a variety of lesser features, in the use of various dramatic devices, in general sententiousness, in digressory moralizing upon social conditions and the proposal of social reforms, in attacks upon social groups, is supposed to reflect the technique and the substance of later tragedy.

Having thus confirmed the basis of its procedure by a substantial amount and quality of evidence modern criticism finds in the Roman plays, more conspicuously in the comedies of Plautus than in those of Terence,² striking exceptions to the uniformity of structure and content demanded by its Euripidean theory. The *Casina*, for example, is a broad farce.³ Various plays operate with inorganic

¹ Difficulties in the assumption that vacant stages in Roman comedy with any regularity mark essential pauses are indicated by Conrad, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

² The differences between the six plays of Terence and the twenty plays of Plautus have probably contributed largely to the development of the methods of modern criticism. Terence reveals a relative regularity in structure; Plautus has many vagaries. The younger poet is supposed to be more closely adapting his Greek originals; Plautus' vagaries are supposed to be Roman. But Terence is two-thirds Menandrian; may not his relative uniformity be merely the relative regularity of a single Greek author, and Plautus' variety, though sometimes Roman, in general the individual variations of a number of Greek playwrights? Modern interpretation of comedy is hampered, from my standpoint, by this concentration upon the uniformity of Terence-Menander; the diversity of Plautus may be the diversity of Hellenistic comedy in the large.

³ Mainly because of its farcical character and the preponderance of song the *Casina*, in modern theory, becomes largely a Plautine composition (Leo, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 126 ff.). It is not clear how Leo would reconcile his two opinions that the songs

characters. The chapters of action are not always artistically joined. Entrance and exit are often weakly motivated, or not explained at all.¹ There are logical contradictions in the facts of the plot. Obviously, if the main presupposition is sound these irregularities and unevennesses must be explained in accord with the presupposition of general dependence upon Euripides. The explanation is found by the critics in two known conditions, one in the Roman methods of composition, the other in the transmission of the Roman texts. An accumulation of weaknesses in one play, especially a combination of two plots of intrigue directed to the same end and accompanied by contradictions of fact and related weaknesses of technique, is explained as due to the adaptation of two or more Greek plays in one Roman copy, to contamination. Isolated defects in various plays are justified as the result of corruption in text-tradition; these were promoted especially by the reproduction of Roman comedies in the generations after Plautus and Terence, such reproductions leading to the revision of the original text by the hands of stage-managers.

of the *Casina* are evidence of Plautine workmanship, and that the lyrical parts of the *Persa*, if Wilamowitz' view of the play is right, require us to consider "ob nicht auch im Original [i.e., of the *Persa*] mehr als bei Menander und Philemon gesungen wurde" (*op. cit.*, I, 120). Because of its complexity I have not attempted, in this brief account of modern interpretation, to state the relation of the problem of the cantica in Plautus to the historical development of comedy.

¹ The broader aspects of motivation in tragedy and comedy must be considered before one may estimate the significance of apparent resemblances between Euripides and the New comedy (cf. C. Harms, *De introitu personarum in Euripidis et novae comoediae fabulis*, Göttingen, 1914). Dramatists may independently develop similar methods of motivation. A stereotyping of dramatic devices may have arisen naturally at the dramatic festivals at Athens which would lead to resemblances in such features between tragedy and comedy without necessarily indicating predominant influence of one type upon the other. The rigidity of scenic background and the domestic setting which New comedy has in common with Euripidean tragedy might produce some common devices of motivation which would not, therefore, establish a theory of Euripidean influence. And finally, Euripides as the precursor of the Hellenistic period would naturally anticipate New comedy in many respects without any direct influence upon the type; so, for example, in the matter of motivating entrance by the emotion of fear (Harms, *op. cit.*, 28 ff.), note the general features common to all the tragic and comic poets, and the single trait which Euripides and New comedy have in common, the emotional exordium. Is this exclusively due to the influence of Euripides, or is it the emotional elaboration of the later epoch which Euripides anticipated? And if there is resemblance in the diction and style of this emotional exordium, is this kind of influence pertinent to a theory that Euripides at an early date determined the form and some of the content of New comedy?

The result of this modern theory and method is a certain neatness and dispatch in the interpretation of Roman comedy. Terence is admitted to be an artistic contaminator; the commentary of Donatus supplies the evidence. But in Plautus everything artistically satisfying is Greek in origin, everything defective and weak is Roman botching, whether of Plautus himself or a later Roman hand. This differentiation of the two dramatists is not at odds with what we know of the different nature and entourage of the two poets. Modern theory has progressed so far that now about one-half of the Plautine corpus is supposed to show the injurious effects of contamination; the scope of retractation is undefinable, affecting various plays in different degrees.

Either retractation or contamination is safely used to explain conditions in our texts when the critic rests his case on a substantial basis of evidence. For example, retractation is often solidly established when the text presents duplicate passages; but the critic enters upon more dangerous ground when mere weakness of technique starts the application of the principle. Contamination is a relatively sound explanation if the critic finds in a given play essential contradictions of fact combined with a double intrigue, each part of which is directed to the same end, and both parts of which are mechanically affixed to each other, as may be the case in the *Poenulus* and *Miles*. But I venture to protest strongly against the application of either principle, and against the presupposition of modern criticism, when they operate exclusively with supposed weaknesses of dramatic technique, or with any apparently abnormal features, that find immediate explanation in the conditions of the dramatic plot, in the needs and demands of the ancient audience, Greek as well as Roman, and in the peculiar arrangements of the ancient stage and theater or in the conventions established by known literary tradition.

The casual and incomplete treatment of large problems of dramatic technique in Roman comedy is due in some measure to the concentration of modern students upon the important questions raised by contamination and retractation; the narrowness of vision induced by such concentration is further increased by intensive studies of single plays which seem, to individual critics, to reveal the

effects of these two factors in the composition and the transmission of the Latin texts.

But even more effective than the consequences of this concentration upon a limited amount of text, and upon two distinct problems raised by the text, has been the fundamental presupposition which dominates the higher criticism of Hellenistic comedy and the Roman adaptations. The assumption, or, as modern criticism holds, the incontrovertible fact, that Euripidean tragedy exerted a potent influence upon comedy at the turn of the fifth century at once establishes a rigid norm and closes the minds of the critics to the possibility that many of the defects of form in Roman comedy are Greek in origin and natural survivals of the incoherence of earlier stages of the Greek type. Modern theory, in spite of its emphasis upon Euripidean influence, cheerfully grants that the Hellenistic type in many respects continues and develops important features of Aristophanic comedy;¹ the critics maintain simply that later comedy inherits more of the essential characteristics of one parent than of the other. Under these circumstances there are clearly other possible explanations: if the evidence warrants it, Hellenistic comedy may derive neither from Aristophanic comedy nor from Euripidean tragedy nor from the marriage of both, but from a different source which combined a relative unity of structure with characters and incidents inherent in comedy rather than tragedy; or it may be that later Greek comedy, like so many other Hellenistic types, was subject to a variety of influences, among which Euripidean tragedy is less significant than modern critics suppose. Certainly many aspects of Hellenistic comedy which resemble corresponding features of the later tragedy are sufficiently explained without resort to the contention that such influence was exerted overwhelmingly at the turn of the fifth century. Through mythological travesty, as the critics admit, tragedy influenced comedy at a much earlier period; later, the pervasive influence of Euripides upon Hellenistic poetry and the direct influence of the tragedian upon individual poets like Menander inevitably affected various Greek playwrights in different degrees. But this statement of the case is far different from a view that

¹ Leo, *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 104 ff.; and (correcting the misapprehension of Süss) *Plaut. Forsch.*², 113, n. 2.

Euripidean art was so dominant an influence early in the development of Hellenistic comedy that a regularity of artistic form was established, deviations from which may be explained only as due to Roman corruption. If this presupposition without being entirely demolished is appreciably weakened, the foundations of modern interpretation are unsettled, the criteria of contamination and retractation are subject to revision, and the problems of dramatic technique must be regarded from a different standpoint.

In the next paper, therefore, I shall endeavor to review without prejudice the evidence bearing upon the antecedents of Hellenistic comedy. Obviously the interpretation of dramatic technique in Roman comedy must depend upon the conclusions of such a study if the evidence warrants positive conclusions.

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THE ANTECEDENTS OF HELLENISTIC COMEDY

BY HENRY W. PRESCOTT

The possibility, which I have briefly indicated (*CP*, XI, 127 ff.), that certain features of Roman comedy regarded by modern critics as inartistic and Roman in origin were inherent in the Greek originals necessitates a review of the evidence upon which this modern criticism bases its presupposition that Hellenistic comedy is the issue of a great *Kunstentwicklung* in which Euripides was the initiating and controlling force. In such a review I must be content, without pretentious bibliography or detailed analysis, to consider the broad foundations of this theory; the critical question which I have to answer is, how far the interpretation of the technique of Roman comedy must be influenced and determined by known facts regarding the development of the form of comedy in earlier stages of its history.

The study of literary genesis in classical literature seldom leads to convincing conclusions. There are usually tremendous gaps in the evidence. And in the case of comedy, particularly, the disadvantage of fragmentary evidence is increased if one admits, as I must, that whatever validity is attached in general to evolutionary development in literature, comedy is peculiarly exposed, as originally an informal popular entertainment and even in its more artistic form ever *en rapport* with the audience, to influences which promote spontaneous generation and encourage the creation of what the biologists call sports. There is great danger in taking comedy too seriously. The problem forced upon me by the modern interpretation of Roman comedy I should be glad to dismiss in the words which Mother Jaguar addressed to her son when he found difficulty in discriminating two new animals in the woods which, like Euripidean tragedy and Hellenistic comedy, seemed to have lost distinguishing traits by a process of exchange and merger: ". . . the one you said couldn't swim, swims, and the one you said couldn't curl up, curls; and they've gone shares in their prickles, I think. . . . " "Son, son," said Mother Jaguar, ever so many times graciously

waving her tail, "a Hedgehog is a Hedgehog, and can't be anything but a Hedgehog; and a Tortoise is a Tortoise, and can never be anything else." "But it isn't a Hedgehog, and it isn't a Tortoise. It's a little bit of both, and I don't know its proper name." "Nonsense," said Mother Jaguar, "everything has its proper name. I should call it 'Armadillo' till I found out the real one. And I should leave it alone."

I

Mother Jaguar's first contention is practically identical with the view of ancient theorists who, in various Greek documents dating in their present form from the eighth to the fifteenth century A.D., derive Hellenistic comedy from the Old comedy of the fifth century.¹ To them comedy is comedy. The general insistence of ancient literary theory upon comedy and tragedy as independent entities may have blinded these critics to the discovery of modern scholars that this later comedy is not comedy, but merely Euripidean tragedy with comic appurtenances. In any case there are reasons for rejecting the ancient theory, at least in so far as it represents Greek comedy throughout its entire history as primarily devoted to abusive criticism of men and affairs, and as changing the objects and the form of its criticism under the influence of external conditions, political or economic.

Democracy encourages an extreme form of *λοιδορία*; oligarchy represses open criticism. So far as it covers only the Old and the Middle periods of Greek comedy, the political environment of the two periods supports the relative validity of the theory up to this point, even if one finds violent criticism in fragments of Middle comedy and observes that orators of the fourth century are apparently immune in attacking men prominent in public life. But the absurdity of the theory becomes apparent when, as may have been the case, a rigid systematizing led to the extension of this simple political formula in order to cover, consistently with the controlling idea, the different form and content of New comedy; for then the

¹ Kaibel, *Comic. Gr. Frag.*, I, 3 ff. contains the text of these documents. References to Kaibel, without further definition, are to the pages and the marginal numbering of lines of this edition. For a critical study of sources, cf. Kaibel, "Die Prolegomena ΠΕΡΙ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΑΣ," *Abhandl. götting. Gesell.*, II/4 (1898).

ancient critics were driven to the extreme contention that in New comedy abusive attack was directed against slaves and foreigners. It is quite evident from the remains of New comedy and from the Roman adaptations that the poets of this later period were innocent of any malicious designs upon slaves and foreigners; the political systematizer has selected these two categories out of the many characters represented in the plays of New comedy, because they furnish a direct antithesis to the rich freemen and influential citizens who, according to the same theory, were subjected to violent criticism in Old comedy. At this point, therefore, ancient critics become purely rhetorical. One may, however, still insist on the plausibility of the general notion if it is limited to Old and Middle comedy, and may regard the weakness as mere botching, by some later hand, of a theory that was reasonable when first presented, perhaps in the course of the fourth century, as an explanation of the differences between Old and Middle comedy.¹

By this shift from explicit criticism to veiled attack and innuendo ancient theory accounts for essential changes in content; development in form it relates particularly to the gradual elimination of the chorus. The statement of the case in Platonius² is blurred and inaccurate. He mentions the defect of *choregoi* and the consequent omission of parabases and *chorika mele* in close connection with his statement of the limitations of free speech under an oligarchy. A clearer statement of the case, in accord with probability, might explicitly relate the diminished importance of the chorus to this suppression of frank criticism, for the chorus as the main instrument in the expression of lampooning attacks on individuals and public policies would necessarily lose its function so soon as outspoken criticism was checked, and would ultimately disappear unless it could acquire a new and equally essential function. But Platonius leaves this important consideration implicit in the context and explicitly refers the diminished rôle of the chorus to financial exigency, resulting apparently from the Peloponnesian War. Consistently, in point of date, he mentions as an example of comedies produced under these conditions the *Aiolosikon* of Aristophanes,

¹ Kaibel, "Die Prolegomena," 48 ff.

² Kaibel, 4/21 ff., and repeated in different form 5/45 ff.

and inaccurately includes, as if of the same date, a mythological travesty by Cratinus, the *Odusses*, which was probably exhibited as early as 440-38; and he explicitly refers this shift from lampooning comedy to mythological travesty, in respect to content as well as to form, to the necessity of diverting criticism from men and affairs to literary material as found in mythological tragedy. A mythological travesty without parabases and *chorika* he represents to be typical of Middle comedy.¹

In my opinion this part of Platonius' statement is a plausible theory, if one revises the form of his expression in accord with known facts and conceivable conditions, correcting his obvious error and emphasizing what he left implicit. Such a revised statement might run thus: Old comedy in the fifth century was devoted mainly to satirical criticism of prominent men. At intervals and temporarily from the middle of the fifth century on this outspoken criticism was checked;² on such occasions the playwrights often resorted to mythological travesty, and the chorus, as the main instrument of satirical attack, dropped into the background. At the turn of the fifth century, when free speech was more effectually suppressed, these mythological comedies, approximately chorusless, emerged as the dominant type of comedy; so that what was occasional and temporary in the case of Cratinus' *Odusses* became normal in the later years of Aristophanes' career and in the productions of Plato and of the earlier poets of the Middle period. That a more reasonable exposition of the theory once existed in Greek documents is suggested by the form which it assumes in Latin documents presumably Greek in origin. A more explicit statement of the case for the chorus, for example, is made by Horace (*A. P.* 283): "chorusque turpiter obtineuit sublato iure nocendi." And the theory in the large appears

¹ It is not clear that Platonius intended to indicate the complete removal of the chorus from the plays that he regards as anticipating the Middle comedy; for some mythological plays the chorus seems to be well authenticated, and for its retention in the Middle period cf. Capps, *AJA*, X (1895), 303 ff.; *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.*, XXXI (1900), 133; Koerte, *N. JHBB. f. d. kl. Alt.*, V (1900), 81 ff.

² The extent of this repression in the fifth century, the legal procedure involved, the particular kind of criticism prohibited by the legal procedure, are all matters of dispute; for discussion and full bibliography cf. Kalinka, *Die Pseudoxenophontische ΑΘΗΝΑΙΩΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ*, pp. 7 ff., and his commentary on II. 18; also Starkie, in his edition of the *Acharnians*, excursus II, pp. 243 f.

in a more rational form in the Latin versions of Evanthius,¹ Diomedes,² and the *Liber Glossarum*.³ Here the absurdity of slaves and foreigners as objects of attack in New comedy is replaced by more discreet generalizations in which New comedy is described as a portrayal of private life devoid of malicious criticism.

II

Acceptable as this revised version of the ancient theory might be, it would have only the validity of partial truth; for it is demonstrable that the exponents of this theory not only committed errors, but omitted an essential amount of evidence that might well have contributed to an understanding of the transition from Old to Middle comedy. For in many of the Greek documents, with remarkable consistency, the individual poets who serve as illustrations of the normal type of comedy in the Old period are Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes—these three and no more.⁴ The concentration upon this famous triad of scurrilous poets is much earlier than the Greek documents in question; for the phrasing in passages of Horace,⁵ Quintilian,⁶ and Velleius⁷ clearly indicates that these three poets had come to stand quite exclusively as representative of Old comedy, at least as early as the first century B.C.

We have, however, unassailable evidence that there existed in the fifth century, quite apart from these and other scurrilous poets, a distinct type of comedy differing in form and content from the scurrilous plays usually cultivated by this triad of poets. Aristotle, in his *Poetics* (1449b), having previously stated the successive changes in tragedy, professes ignorance of corresponding changes in comedy. Comedy was informal; it was officially recognized only late in its development and had already assumed definite form at the time when individual poets were recorded in the official reports of dramatic contests. In the midst of this frank confession of ignorance, however, Aristotle asserts positively that the invention of plots originated in

¹ Kaibel, 64/66 ff.

² *Ibid.*, 58/166 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, 72/15 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3/3, 3/12, 6/73-90, 15/70, 58/165, 62/23; also Ps. Dionys. *Ars rhet.* 57.19 Usener; cf. Kroehnert, *Canonesne poet. script. artif.* *fuertint*, Königsberg (1897), 27.

⁵ *Serm.* i. 4. 1; cf. Persius i. 123 ff.

⁶ x. 1. 66.

⁷ i. 16. 3.

Sicily and was introduced into Athens by Crates, who was the first of the Athenians to abandon scurrilous comedy and to generalize themes or plots.¹ There can, I think, be no reasonable doubt that Aristotle in this passage is conscious of the antithesis between the comedy of his own day and the Old comedy. The general context indicates a close relation between the iambographs and the poets of Old comedy, who have in common the *ιαμβικὴ ἰδέα* and *λοιδορία*. To Aristotle the generalized comedy of his own day is opposed and superior to this scurrilous comedy (cf. *Poet.* 1451b; *Eth. Nic.* 1128a. 22), and by implication he is finding in Epicharmus and Crates the earlier background of the generalizing tendencies of Hellenistic comedy and its unity of plot as contrasted with the incoherent satirical burlesque usually cultivated by poets of the Old comedy. The great difficulty lies in our determining from such a general statement and from fragmentary evidence of the content and form both of Sicilian comedy and its issues in the hands of Crates and Pherecrates² just what progress, if any, had been made near the middle of the fifth century toward either the non-scurrilous mythological travesty of the Middle period or the well-organized comedy of manners that we find ultimately in the Roman adaptations of Greek models, most of which were probably post-Aristotelian in date.

From the tantalizing array of titles and fragments of Epicharmus' plays³ one fact immediately emerges: more than half of the thirty-six extant titles point to mythological themes. It is, of course, a negative fact of doubtful significance that the fragments contain no evidence of scurrilous attacks on individuals, but the Doric farce

¹ τὸ δὲ μῦθος ποιεῖν Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμις· τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκ Σικελίας ἦλθε· τῶν δὲ Ἀθηνησιν Κράτης πρῶτος ἤρξεν ἀφένεος τῆς ἰαμβικῆς ἰδέας καθόλου ποιεῖν λόγους καὶ μῦθους. (Cf. Themistius *Or.* 27. p. 406 Dind.) Changes proposed in the text of Aristotle do not affect the passage for our purposes. On the interpretation of *λόγους καὶ μῦθους* cf. Vahlen, *Sitzb. d. kais. Akad. d. Wiss. zu Wien* (phil.-hist. Cl.), L (1865), 295-98; and for a summary of various modern interpretations of the passage cf. Behaghel, *Gesch. d. Auffassung d. aristoph. Vögel*, II, 6, n. 2.

² An anonymous treatise on the poets of comedy, after characterizing Crates, says of Pherecrates (Kaibel 8/33): . . . ἐξήλωκε Κράτητα καὶ αὐτοῦ μὲν λοιδορεῖν ἀπέστη, πράγματα δὲ εἰσηγούμενος καινὰ ἠδδοκίμει, γενόμενος εὐρετικὸς μύθων.

³ The extreme skepticism regarding Epicharmus and his work (Wilamowitz, *Textg. d. gr. Lyriker*, 24 ff.; *GGA* [1906], 621 ff.; Fraenkel, *de mœd. et nov. com. gr. quaest. sel.* [Göttingen, 1912], 78, n. 1) seems to me quite unwarranted; cf. Körte, *Burs.-Jahresb.*, CLII (1911), 231.

from which Sicilian comedy is supposed to develop and the political environment of Epicharmus do not provide a background for lampooning comedy such as Athens cultivated in the atmosphere of the carnival-*komos*.¹ It is quite possible that to Athenians of Crates' time the mythological plays of Epicharmus furnished a sharp antithesis to the lampooning burlesques of Cratinus. And not only in content but in form; for mythological themes, whether derived from oral tradition, epic poetry, or tragedy, have already been organized for the comic poet, in earlier popular or literary tradition, with a degree of coherence and unity that would stand in striking contrast with the inorganic satirical drama of Athens in the fifth century. In brief, the conditions provide for a direct line of descent from the mythological plays of Epicharmus through occasional Athenian vagaries like the *Odusses* of Cratinus to the mythological travesty that dominated the comic stage at Athens in the later days of Aristophanes and in the time of Plato and his immediate successors. And not only the relative coherence of mythological plot, but the absence of a chorus from the plays of Epicharmus, so far as the fragments negatively attest, provide the requisite background for both the chorusless Hellenistic type and for an intermediate form in which a chorus, relatively inactive, perhaps appeared with an entrance song, but denied itself parabasis and regularly recurring *chorika mele*, as Platonius seems to assert and as the present text of the *Plutus*² may serve to illustrate. Such an intermediate form may have been a compromise between the Sicilian and the normal Attic form of comedy, leading the way to a chorusless type of play in the New, if not in the Middle, period.

But, although known facts and conditions could be harmonized with such a theory of historical continuity in the development of a

¹ Non-scurrilous comedy, in the sense in which I use the term, does not necessarily avoid satirical attacks upon social and political groups or implicit attacks on individuals, but does eliminate explicit lampooning of governmental policies and individuals, particularly those prominent in public life. So, for example, Epicharmus may attack the soothsayers (frag. 9, cf. Rhinthon frag. 17 Kaibel), and even in Sicilian mime, under the direction of the tyrant Dionysius, Xenarchus may lampoon the citizens of Rhegium (Xenarchus frag. 2 Kaibel). Similar attacks upon social and political groups frequently recur in Hellenistic comedy.

² On the *Plutus* as a "neoterizing" comedy, cf. *Vita Aristoph.* (Van Leeuwen, *Proleg. ad Aristoph.*, p. 173) and the critical apparatus of Kaibel 18/30.

non-scurrilous mythological comedy, it would be difficult from extant evidence to resolve plausible theory into incontestable fact. And even if mythological comedy in the Middle period were satisfactorily accounted for by such reasoning, a coherent comedy of manners, sentiment, and intrigue such as emerges in the Middle period and becomes dominant in the New period would still remain unexplained. Of course, as a mere statement of possibility, it is reasonable to assert that mythological comedy offers an opening for the development out of itself of a comedy of manners, sentiment, and intrigue; for the travesty of the gods and heroes of myth is most easily effected by reducing these supernatural beings to the level of ordinary human creatures and by subjecting them to the experiences of everyday life; mythological comedy had probably anticipated Euripides in humanizing gods and heroes.¹ Yet the development of a comedy of manners from such a source would seem somewhat forced and roundabout if the rudiments of a comedy of manners existed in the germs which, transferred to Sicily and Southern Italy from the Peloponnesus, Epicharmus and others may have developed in his artistic rehabilitation of earlier Dorian elements. It should, however, be expressly stated that any attempt to reconstruct a comedy of manners from what we know of Epicharmus, Crates, and Pherecrates is bound to result merely in the accumulation of a number of facts, each weak in itself, and many of them resting upon somewhat dubious hypotheses. The difficulty of differentiating the character-

¹ Mythological comedy may of course be political, as Cratinus' *Dionusalexandros*, *Nemesis*, and *Drapetides* attest, but in such cases innuendo rather than explicit attack seems to have been the rule; and general social satire was always available in mythological comedy. On the other hand, Plautus' *Amphitruo* may suggest how easily a mythological comedy approaches a comedy of manners, and how fully some myths provide the essential themes of intrigue, sentiment, confusion of identity. It is probable that mythological comedy provided a rich variety of form and content. The handling of the myth in Cratinus' *Dionusalexandros*, as we now know from the hypothesis, illustrates the comical perversion of the story, while the *Amphitruo* shows how closely the travesty may keep to the myth, expanding simply the theme of confused identity. And as regards form, though the chorus in Athenian mythological comedy may have been relatively inactive in some cases, yet it seems to have maintained its function in other cases, as the hypothesis of the *Dionusalexandros*, again, perhaps attests. In brief, though I think I may safely refer to mythological comedy as non-scurrilous in the Aristotelian sense, I do not intend to ascribe any uniformity in content or form to the type; it furnished an opportunity for mitigating or avoiding personal attack. A complete and orderly synthesis of the attainable facts regarding the form and content of mythological comedy is much desired.

istics of Sicilian comedy in general is due, not merely to the scantiness of material evidence, but to the fact that Sicilian comedy and Attic comedy, in the opinion of many modern scholars, were both dependent upon Doric farce, the former being an embellished form of Doric farce, the latter a combination of Doric farce with an indigenous Attic element, the *komos*-chorus. If these modern views are correct, even Aristophanic comedy is likely to reveal some features that appeared in the plays of Epicharmus;¹ and if we are searching for a non-scurrilous type of Old Attic comedy that existed before and alongside of Aristophanic comedy, but distinct from most of it in form and content, it becomes peculiarly hazardous to stress the broad characteristics of Doric farce as possibly continued through Epicharmus, Crates, and Pherecrates to the time of the Middle comedy and later. Only the precise statement of Aristotle leads me, with this admission of the difficulty and the hazard, to emphasize in the evidence of Doric farce, of Epicharmus, and of Crates and Pherecrates those features which conceivably might foreshadow distinguishing traits of a comedy of manners in the Middle period.

Doric farce in the Peloponnesus may well have been hardly more than a loosely connected series of scenes, a compromise between mime and drama.² The statement in Athenaeus 621d, on the authority of Sosibius, regarding an early Spartan *παιδιά* performed by a *dikelistes* suggests mime rather than fully developed drama; and the scenes briefly covered under the captions "men stealing fruit" and "a foreign physician," with a quotation from a comedy of Alexis in the Middle period to illustrate what a foreign physician might say in such a *παιδιά*, may have been independent mimes rather than parts of a larger play. The bracketing of "men stealing fruit" with a foreign physician weakens the force of the passage for our purposes, but the physician as a character,³ the implied differentiation of foreign and native professional types, and the use of a passage of Middle comedy for illustrative purposes should at least arrest the

¹ Cf. von Salis, *de Doriensium ludorum in comoedia Att. vestigiis*, Basle, 1905.

² Cf. Thiele, *N. JHBB f. d. kl. Alt.*, IX (1902), 411 ff.

³ The passage of Alexis seems to point to the use of dialect, whether native or professional; a physician is generally supposed to be the speaker in Crates, frag. 41, and there uses Doric; cf. von Salis, *op. cit.*, 22 f.; the physician appears in late mimes according to Choricus V. 4 (*Rev. de phil.*, I [1877], 212).

attention of anybody who is searching for possible anticipations of the professional types of Hellenistic comedy in earlier dramatic forms. In harmony with this evidence of professional types and also of the discrimination of foreign and native rôles stands the statement regarding masks used in the farce of Peloponnesian Megara: a native and a foreign cook were provided with distinguishing masks and type-names, Maeson and Tettix.¹ Whether these and other professional types,² if there were such, were taken over by Epicharmus from his home in Peloponnesian Megara to his Sicilian habitat and there developed in a comedy of manners, we have no means of knowing. There is hardly valid evidence, but only a priori assumption that any plays of Epicharmus were comedies of types, of manners, of private life, such as we find in the Hellenistic period.

We must certainly beware of ascribing to Epicharmus any strict uniformity in the content and form of his dramatic poems,³ the general word "comedy" is improperly applied to them; some of them may have been mimes. Among these mimes probably belong the "debates," Γὰ καὶ Θάλασσα and Λόγος καὶ Λογίνα; these titles do not suggest anything more than a dramatized debate constituting the whole of a dramatic poem. We have no reason to suppose that the two debates were smaller parts of a larger drama and corresponded to the *agones* of Aristophanic comedy; such debates, however, might easily become parts of a larger whole, and one may properly find analogues, not in the *agones* of Aristophanic comedy, but in the

¹ For the evidence and discussion, cf. Kaibel 76; Schneidewin, *Coniect. crit.*, 120 ff.; Rankin, *The Rôle of the Mageiroi*, etc., 13 ff.; Robert, *Die Masken d. neuer. att. Komödie*, 12 ff., 71 ff. The comic effects secured by Cratinus in his *Odusses* may be due to a fusion of the *mageiros* and of the epic Cyclops (cf. Tanner, *Trans. Amer. Phil. Assoc.*, XLVI [1915], 176).

² Modern scholars usually find the background of the professional types of Hellenistic comedy in corresponding figures in the episodic scenes of Aristophanic comedy. So far as professional rôles in later comedy are often inorganic, there is some analogy, but as regards the particular professional types employed, the cook, physician, and parasite of Doric farce and Epicharmus offer a more precise background than anything in Aristophanes. The passage of Athenaeus (659a) which seems to refer to Megarian farce the mask of the cook also mentions a mask of a *θεράπων*. The slave is too general a rôle to be used for discriminating varieties of comedy, though the Phluax-vases may provide evidence for Doric farce (von Salis, *op. cit.*, 23 ff.). It is the slave who makes comedy out of tragedy according to the prologue of the *Amphitruo*; it is interesting to find him emerging into the foreground in the later plays of Aristophanes; on his rôle in Old comedy cf. Zuretti, *Riv. di filol.*, XXXI (1903), 46 ff.

³ Cf. Thiele, *op. cit.*, 418, who argues more from titles than I should venture to do.

discussion between the two *Δόγοι* in the *Clouds* and in a faded form in the implied opposition of Wealth and Poverty in the *agon* of the *Plutus* (487 ff.).¹ Among these debates of Epicharmus there is no valid reason for including the *Ἑλπίς ἢ Πλοῦτος*; neither the title nor the fragments indicate the nature of the piece; from it are quoted the only fragments that may bear upon professional rôles in Epicharmus. These two fragments (34, 35) are spoken by a character whom Athenaeus (235e) describes in the words: "Carystus the Pergamene, in his work *Περὶ διδασκαλιῶν*, says that the parasite, as we now call him, was first invented by Alexis, forgetting that Epicharmus introduced him in his *Ἑλπίς ἢ Πλοῦτος*." Accepting the correction, we note again the *post hoc* in the combination of Epicharmus and Alexis corresponding to the quotation of Alexis in Athenaeus 621d to illustrate what the foreign physician in Doric farce might say.² In the second place we must observe that Athenaeus' statement implies that Epicharmus did not call the character a parasite;³ nor have we evidence that the parasite, under that name, existed in contemporary society. Thirdly, as regards technique, we should not overlook the fact that Athenaeus distinctly says that the character in speaking these verses was answering inquiries—that is, the speech was not in the form of monologue as corresponding speeches of parasites in Hellenistic comedy are likely to be; nor can we determine the

¹ Cf. the same opposition in Pherecrates' *Persai*. The debates in Epicharmus seem to me to be peculiarly rhetorical, as we might expect them to be in the home of rhetoric. The figures in the debate are abstract. The immediate issues and connections are to be found in the pastoral debate, in Callimachus' poem on the contest between the olive and the laurel, in the *Mortis et Vitae Iudicium* and *Cocus et Pistor*. The vigorous action and the live questions involved in Aristophanic *agones* might have developed, under the special conditions of Athenian life in the fifth century, from the placid debates of Epicharmus, but I should more easily admit a common origin of the two things than a development directly from mere debate into *agon*; such a common source might perhaps be found in the religious practices discussed by Usener, *Archiv f. Religionswiss.*, VII (1904), 297 ff., 313. Conceivably, *Luxuria* and *Inopia* in the prologue of Plautus' *Trinummus* are a much faded relic of the debate in Epicharmus, and abstractions like *Agnoia* and *Auxilium* in the prologues of New comedy may weakly reflect the interest of Epicharmus in allegorical figures instead of being merely casual variations of the usual *divinity-prologus*. Sieckmann's extravagant theory of the debate in Epicharmus (*de com. Att. primordiis*, Göttingen, 1906) is exploded by Süß, *BPW* (1907), 1377.

² On the general connection between Alexis and Epicharmus cf. Kaibel in *PWRE*, I, 1470.

³ But cf. Giese, *de parasiti persona* (Berlin, 1908), 5, n. 1.

organic relation of the speaker to the rest of the action. But with all these reservations the fragments which Athenaeus quotes, and especially frag. 35, put in the mouth of the speaker many of the stock themes of the later parasite, as ἄκλητος, γελωτοποιὸς, κόλαξ, and poverty-stricken, returning after the banquet besotted and unattended, mauled by the police, to his rough shake-down.¹ If the character in Epicharmus played only such a rôle as the parasitic slaves of Demos in Aristophanes' *Knights*, or the parasites of Eupolis' *Kolakes*, or of Aristophanes' *Tagenistai* he loses much of his significance for our present purpose, but in view of Aristotle's statement we are justified in pointing out the possible import of the two fragments.

The evidence of a comedy of manners in Sicily is not increased by consideration of the extant titles of Epicharmus' plays. One may often identify mythological comedy and the debate in Epicharmus by the title, but a supposition that the *Agrostinos* or the *Megaris*² is necessarily a comedy of private life can never with our present material be more than idle hypothesis. A vague argument from probability may be easily constructed by anybody who notes the obvious portrayal of private life in contemporary mimes of Sophron, or who cares to stress the scenes from private life often recognizable in the Phluax-vases of Southern Italy, assuming that these reflect a form of Doric farce which Epicharmus himself elaborated;³ and one may fairly observe that the Atellan play in Italy, with its obvious points of contact with Hellenistic comedy, is supposed by many modern scholars to have developed from the same elements of Doric farce which were incorporated in the Phluakes and embellished by

¹ For parallel themes in Hellenistic comedy, cf. Giese, *op. cit.*, 8, nn. 1, 2. That Crates frag. 3 was spoken by a parasite is merely an interesting guess, particularly interesting because the fragment is from the *Geitones*, in which (cf. below p. 420) Crates, after Epicharmus, exhibited drunkards on the stage. There is some general resemblance between Epich. frag. 35 and the epigram of Posidippus on the parasite which I have interpreted in *CP*, V (1910), 494 ff., so far as the difficulties of the homeward journey are concerned. For an extremely skeptical view of the evidence, cf. Fraenkel, *op. cit.*, 78, n. 1.

² Having no faith in titles as evidence, I refer to von Salis, *op. cit.*, 51 ff. for a list of titles which Epicharmus has in common with poets of later comedy.

³ The contrary view that the vases, being from the third century, illustrate a drama influenced by Hellenistic comedy would vitiate such evidence.

Epicharmus.¹ In general, it would facilitate our understanding of Hellenistic comedy and its background if we were in a position to prove that back of Epicharmus and of the Atellan play and of the Phluakes lay mythological and biological mimes which the Sicilian poet had developed from isolated or loosely connected scenes into coherent plays of manners and mythology, perhaps shorter in compass than the plays of either Old or New comedy. But of the mime in any early period it is difficult to recover clear traces, least of all to discern what relation it bore to the comedy, whether Dorian or Attic, which so often shows traits in common with it. Personally I find it difficult to regard as purely casual and accidental the transition which Athenaeus makes to his account of the beginnings of comedy, particularly of the mimic entertainments of the Spartan *dikelistes*. The whole passage, it will be remembered, is imbedded in an account of musical entertainments. Before passing to the *κωμική παιδιά* of the Spartan *dikelist*, as described by Sosibius, Athenaeus, discussing the musical mime, quotes Aristoxenus for the assertion that *τὴν μὲν ἰλαρωδίαν σεμνὴν οὖσαν παρὰ τὴν τραγωδίαν εἶναι, τὴν δὲ μαγωδίαν παρὰ τὴν κωμωδίαν*, and continues: *πολλάκις δὲ οἱ μαγωδοὶ καὶ κωμικὰς ὑποθέσεις λαβόντες ὑποκρίθησαν κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀγωγὴν καὶ διάθεσιν*. Then briefly explaining the etymology of *μαγωδία*, he passes at once to the *κωμική παιδιά* of Sparta and ultimately to the heckling phallic chorus from which Aristotle derives Attic comedy. Magody is Ionic rather than Doric, but it is only a form of the pan-Hellenic mime and the rôles which the magodist assumed, *ὑποκρινόμενος ποτὲ μὲν γυναικας [καὶ] μοιχοὺς καὶ μαστροπούς, ποτὲ δὲ ἄνδρα μεθύοντα καὶ ἐπὶ κῶμον παραγινόμενον πρὸς τὴν ἐρωμένην* bring us into the range of characters and materials that would help much toward a reconstruction of the background of Hellenistic comedy, if we could once demonstrate that any of the plays of Epicharmus, contemporary of Sophron, were variously developed forms of the mime.² But as it is, the titles of Epicharmus' plays

¹ Cf. Marx, *PWRE*, s. v. Atellana.

² As Hiller has pointed out (*Rh. Mus.*, XXX [1875], 72) one should not hastily infer from Aristoxenus that magody developed later than the comedy with which it has characters and themes in common. The post-Christian remains of mime are always open to the charge of being influenced by comedy, but they read like popular, unliterary productions. The *certamen* between sailors on river boats and sailors on

lend greater plausibility to a theory of the influence of mythological than of biological mime.

With substantial evidence of a mythological comedy in Sicily and hardly more than vague surmisings of a comedy of manners we turn to Crates and Pherecrates. The scanty evidence of their dramatic work only negatively supports Aristotle's statement; the fragments are devoid of scurrilous attack; the titles are often non-committal, but they certainly suggest no emphasis upon mythological subject-matter and only by the incautious may they be used to demonstrate a comedy of manners. But outside the unknown and unknowable of titles and fragments there lies a tangible bit of evidence that seems to corroborate in a general way Aristotle's sharp discrimination of Crates' work from the less organic scurrilous comedy of the fifth century. In the notable document which Aristophanes gives us in the parabasis of the *Knights*, recounting the history of comedy down to his own day, the characterization of Crates, following the account of Magnes, with his interest in fantastic plays, and of Cratinus as the browbeater of contemporary wrongdoers, is highly significant in comparison with Aristotle's statement. Unfortunately Aristophanes' mysterious figurative language is as tantalizing as Aristotle's broad generalization; yet the two statements are, in a somewhat negative sense, harmonious. Crates, according to Aristophanes,¹ served a lunch to the audience at slight expense; he fashioned the neatest conceits in the driest style.² His reward was the wrath of the audience and hard knocks; yet *he* single-handed held his ground, sometimes failing, sometimes succeeding. Naturally

ocean-faring vessels, the opposition of sober man and drunkard, in late mimes are in spirit and form, though not in time, near the debates of Epicharmus (cf. the fifth edition of Crusius' Herondas 134-39). And the *Charition* (Crusius, *ibid.*, 101 ff.) should be more significant to any student of Hellenistic comedy than Euripides' *Iph. Taur.* and *Helena*.

¹ οἷας δὲ Κράτης ὀργὰς ὑμῶν ἠρέσχετο καὶ στυφελίμους,
ὅς ἀπὸ μικρᾶς δαπάνης ὑμᾶς ἀριστίζων ἀπέπεμπεν,
ἀπὸ κραμβοτάτου στόματος μάττων ἀστειωτάτας ἐπινοίας·
χοῦτος μέντοι μόνος ἀντήρκει, τοτὲ μὲν πίπτων τοτὲ δ' οὐχί [537-40].

² On the interpretation of ἀπὸ κραμβοτάτου στόματος μάττων I have no convictions, but whether the adjective is connected with κράμβη, of a plain fare, or with κράμβος, of a dry style, the phrase reinforces the meaning of ἀριστίζων; for various views, compare, not only the commentators, but Wilamowitz, *Antigonos von Karystos*, 96, and the recent suggestions discussed by Körte, *Burs.-Jahresb.*, CLII (1911), 293.

the interpretation of the passage is much disputed. A possible clue to the main thought is contained in Aristophanes frag. 333,¹ in which Crates is caricatured again for what we may suspect is an example of his "conceits" (cf. Crates frag. 29), and the adverb *ἀπόνως* seems to be applied with a suggestion of the slight outlay of intellectual effort which, from Aristophanes' standpoint, was expended by Crates in his comedies. To this meager mental expenditure, I think, Aristophanes refers in the "lunch at small expense" in the *Knights*. But that Aristophanes has in mind a tamer non-scurrilous comedy which, as compared with the virulent abuse in Cratinus, seems to him a lunch at slight expense is by no means clear; he may be referring only to such details of Crates' plays as he attacks in frag. 333, in which, apparently, a mere phrase or conceit of Crates is ironically handled in figurative language that is not unlike the figure employed in *Knights* 538.² The value, therefore, of the passage of the *Knights* lies, in my opinion, simply in the sharp differentiation of Crates from the other comic poets, not in the details of the description, which only by hasty and rash interpretation can be made to refer precisely to a non-scurrilous comedy.³

Outside of the *Knights* (and the scholia *ad loc.*, to which I shall refer later) only a scrap or two of external evidence remains, and that, again, is tantalizing. A recently discovered commentary on Aristophanes (*Papiri Greco-Egizii*, ii. 9) contains the words: (*πρῶτος δὲ ὁ Κράτ(η)ς (εἰ)σή(γαγεν)*), then a gap, and *καπηλίδων* in the next sentence. This may have ascribed to Crates the introduction of characters like the *καπηλίδες*, and the general drift may have loosely corresponded to the assertion in an anonymous writer on comedy

¹ The text of the fragment (cf. Kaibel's *Athenaeus* 117c) is unintelligible in part, though the general meaning is clear. Comedy is represented, ironically, as furnishing *μέγα βρῶμα* at the time of Crates; and the diet supplied by Comedy in his time is illustrated by *τάριχος ἐλεφάντινον*, the whimsical phrase of Crates.

² The resemblance lies between the lunch in the *Knights* and the *μέγα βρῶμα* furnished by Comedy according to the ironic statement of the fragment.

³ I admit, of course, that with Aristotle's statement in mind one easily yields to the temptation of pressing the meaning of the passage of the *Knights*, but in view of frag. 333 I think that it is in the interest of conservative interpretation to avoid such large inferences as Neil, *ad loc.*, draws in saying that Crates represents "a foreshadowing of the New comedy" and that "*ἀστεῖος* would especially suit the Athenian Terence."

(Kaibel, 7/30), who says of Crates: καὶ πρῶτος μεθύοντας ἐν κωμῳδίᾳ παρήγαγεν. The same fact is reported in Athenaeus (429a), who in a trivial discussion of the use of drunkards in the drama, after contending that Aeschylus, not Euripides, πρῶτος . . . παρήγαγε τὴν τῶν μεθύοντων ὄψιν εἰς τραγωδίαν, continues: ἀγνοοῦσί τε οἱ λέγοντες πρῶτον Ἐπίχαρμον ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνὴν παραγαγεῖν μεθύοντα, μεθ' ὃν Κράτῃτα ἐν Γείτοσι. Quite apart from the validity of such accounts of εὐρήματα, the use of drunkards does not necessarily point to any specific type of comedy, but we may at least observe in Athenaeus the *post hoc* that again binds Epicharmus and Crates; it is not, however, stated as a *propter hoc*.¹

Passing to internal evidence, we find that neither the titles nor the fragments of Crates' and Pherecrates' plays have more than negative value. The statement of Suidas regarding Crates that there were two poets of the name attaches some doubt to the authorship of the titles and fragments referred to him. Clearly, however, neither Aristophanes nor Aristotle was conscious of any ambiguity in referring to Crates. Of the *Thesaurus* and the *Philarguros*, titles which seem to some indicative of a comedy of manners, we have no fragments. Meineke,² judging from the titles, immediately denies the authorship of Crates, and ascribes the plays to the period of Middle or New comedy, a rather singular procedure in view of Aristotle's statement. But only a hasty critic will argue much from such titles. Plays with the title *Thesaurus*, to be sure, were written by half a dozen Hellenistic poets, and Philemon's play of that name was the model of Plautus' *Trinummus*. Certainly *Philarguros* would be a fitting title for a character comedy such as suggested Plautus' *Aulularia*. But Crates' *Thesaurus* may in plot have more nearly resembled Aristophanes' *Plutus* (in this case, perhaps, of some interest as an example of the type of Middle comedy), and we cannot deny that *φιλάργυρος* may mean "grafter" as well as "miser," and that the play was as likely to be a scurrilous satire as a character comedy.³ These possibilities I mention simply to justify my refusal

¹ The evidence clearly does not warrant any suggestion of connection between the drunkards in Crates' plays and the κῶμος μεθύοντων of Menander.

² *FCG*, I, 64.

³ The rôle played by *Thesaurus* in Lucian's *Timon* (compared with Antiphanes' *Timon*) strengthens the suggestion that Crates' *Thesaurus* might have resembled the

to argue from titles alone. Of mythological comedy, which is the most completely authenticated material of Epicharmus' plays, Crates has no clear trace save in the title *Dionusos*. Little can safely be argued of the content of the plays from the fragments; the *Theria* presented a picture of Schlaraffenland in which the table set itself, wine poured itself, and the like. This may have been social satire rather than personal abuse; if so, one may well note that such a type of comedy might fall within the range of Aristotle's reference to generalized comedy. Such criticism of social conditions, as distinguished from personal abuse, is more fully suggested by the titles of Pherecrates' plays; frag. 155 proves that this poet was not entirely averse to personal attack, but otherwise the fragments contain no personal criticism. Titles like *Agrioi*, *Metalles*, *Krapataloi*, *Murmekanthropoi*, in combination with fragments and external evidence, point to an interest in Utopian sociological comedy. *Anthropherakles*, *Pseudheracles*, *Cheiron* might have been mythological. Tantalizing possibilities of a comedy of manners are contained in three titles, *Ἐπιλήσμων ἢ Θάλαττα*, *Korianno*, *Petale*; for there is some reason to think that Korianno, and possibly Thalatta and Petale, were names of courtezans.¹

Baffling as the search is for positive confirmation of the facts expressed in Aristotle's statement, I think that we may safely say that his characterization of Crates was part of a larger and consistent theory which found in Sicilian comedy, and in occasional imitations of it in Athens in the fifth century, a substantial foreshadowing of Hellenistic comedy. The scholia on the passage of the *Knights* already discussed are the usual mass of error, idle fancy, and possible fact. One of them, erroneously referring to Crates as a tragic poet,

Plutus in a general way rather than any such play as Philemon wrote. On *φιλάργυρος* in the sense of "grafter" cf. Platonius' account of comedy (Kaibel 3/8), where *φιλάργυροι* is obviously covered by the *χρήματα συλλέγουσιν ἐξ ἀδικίας* of Kaibel 5/49.

¹ The evidence in the case of Thalatta and Petale is hardly valid, that for Korianno is more substantial; cf. Meineke, *FCG*, I, 82, 83, 86 n. 29. The bibulous women, the quarrel of father and son, both perhaps in love with the same courtesan, are suggestive details in the *Korianno*. That Anaxandrides (Suidas s.v.) was the first to introduce into comedy *ἔρωτας καὶ παρθένων φθοράς* is contradicted by what is reported of Aristophanes' *Kokalos* and, in general, statements in which *εὐρήματα* are ascribed to Hellenistic comic poets only substantiate the frequent recurrence in their plays of certain characters and themes. On the *Agrioi* cf. Hoffmann, *Ad antiq. com. historiam symbolae*, Berlin, 1910.

ascribes to him *ὀλιγόστιχα ποιήματα*, and another begins *σμικρὰ ἐποίει*. . . . These references to the smaller compass of Crates' productions may be idle inferences from the "lunch at small expense" in the text of Aristophanes,¹ but a play without a chorus or with a relatively inactive chorus would naturally be appreciably shorter than the normal play of Aristophanes. The concluding sentence, however, of the second scholium is worthy of more serious attention. It will be remembered that Aristophanes in the text distinctly says that Crates endured the anger of the audience and rough knocks at the hands of the spectators, though the younger poet admits that occasional success in the dramatic competition rewarded Crates' efforts. This second scholium is sufficiently at variance with Aristophanes' statement to warrant an inference that the scholiast has information other than that furnished by Aristophanes; the scholium reads: *σμικρὰ ἐποίει καὶ ἕτερπε τοὺς ἀκροατάς, γράφων ἡδέα*. Aristophanes has certainly not emphasized the entertainment furnished the audience by Crates. Now in a familiar passage of Aristotle's *Ethics* (1128a) the philosopher distinguishes buffoonery from true wit:² the buffoon aims only to excite laughter rather than to say what is seemly and to avoid paining the object of his ridicule. Later Aristotle illustrates the difference by an appeal to the Old and the New comedies, meaning by the latter what we call the Middle comedy, and expresses the thought which underlies the ancient theory of comedy found in the late Greek documents summarized above, viz.; that Old comedy found *τὸ γελοῖον* in *αἰσχρολογία*, New (Middle) comedy in *ὑπόνοια*. He then raises the question how we are to define seemly jesting in these words: *πότερον οὖν τὸν εὖ σκώπτοντα ὀριστέον τῷ λέγειν μὴ ἀπρεπῇ ἐλευθερίῳ, ἢ τῷ μὴ λυπεῖν τὸν ἀκούοντα ἢ καὶ τέρπειν; ἢ καὶ τὸ γε τοιοῦτον ἀόριστον; ἄλλο γὰρ ἄλλω μισητόν τε καὶ ἡδύ*. The sharp antithesis between *τὸ λυπεῖν* and *τὸ τέρπειν*, as coterminous with the differentiation between *αἰσχρολογία*

¹ The *Liber Glossarum* (Kaibel, 72/14) ascribes to the earliest writers of Old comedy plays not over 300 verses in length, a statement that is discredited by Kaibel, "Die Prolegomena," 46, n. 1 and exploited by Sieckmann, *op. cit.*, 24, as harmonizing with Birt's conjectural estimate of the length of Epicharmus' plays.

² Cornford, *The Origin of Attic Comedy*, 218 n. 1, briefly notes the relation between the two passages (and Evanthius, quoted above), but Hendrickson, in dealing with Roman satire, had already made full use of the relevant material; cf. *AJP*, XV (1894), 1 ff; XXI (1900), 121 ff; especially XV (1894), 25 and nn. 1, 2.

and ὑπόνοια, and between Old and Middle comedy warrants us, I think, in suspecting that the scholiast on the *Knights* in his strange emphasis on ἔτερπε and ἡδέα is dependent upon just such a differentiation of Old and Middle comedy as Aristotle makes, and by referring to Crates as interested primarily in τὸ τέρπειν the scholiast may be echoing part of a fuller discussion of the matter by Aristotle in which not only was Middle comedy differentiated from the Old in the terms of the *Ethics*, but Crates was represented as anticipating the Middle comedy in the terms of the *Poetics*.

This theory seems to emerge in other ancient documents. An anonymous writer on comedy (Kaibel 7/28-8/35) agrees with Aristotle in ascribing non-scurrilous comedy to Crates and adds Pherecrates to the list. In describing Crates he uses the phrase πάνν γελοῖος καὶ ἱλαρὸς γενόμενος. The adjective ἱλαρὸς is in implied antithesis to αὐστηρὸς, πικρὸς, and the like, descriptive of the normal poets of Old comedy. This particular antithesis is prominent in the Latin documents, which, we have already remarked, offer a more reasonable statement of Greek theory than the Greek documents, when they come to differentiate the New comedy from the Old. So in the *Liber Glossarum* (Kaibel 72/15) the adjective ἱλαρὸς applied to Crates is recalled in the sentence: "postea autem ommissa maledicendi libertate privatorum hominum vitam cum hilaritate imitabantur, admonentes quid adpetendum quidve cavendum esset." And ἡδέα γράφων applied to Crates by the scholiast on the *Knights* is recalled when we observe the sharp antithesis between the bitter and the sweet of the Old and the New comedy, respectively, in such statements as Diomedes makes (Kaibel 58/165): "secunda aetate fuerunt Aristophanes, Eupolis et Cratinus, qui et principum vitia sectati acerbissimas comoedias composuerunt. tertia actas fuit Menandri, Diphili et Philemonis, qui omnem acerbiteratem comoediae mitigaverunt. . . ." And so Evanthius (Kaibel 64/70) distinguishes New comedy as the type "quae . . . minus amaritudinis spectatoribus et eadem opera multum delectationis afferret." Through all such commentary runs the Aristotelian antithesis of λυπεῖν and τέρπειν, of (πικρὸς) and ἡδύς as coterminous with the λαιδορία and the ὑπόνοια of Old and Hellenistic comedy, and the characterization of Crates is an inherent part of this theory.

The theory as theory therefore can be substantially rehabilitated; the value which we attach to it will accord with our estimate of Aristotle's worth as a literary critic. It will, however, still be impossible to confirm either the facts or the theory from the material evidence supplied by our extant remains of Sicilian comedy and of Crates. From this evidence the only conservative inference, if we attach any value to Aristotle's statement, may be best expressed in Wilamowitz' discreet comment:¹ "Um die Entwicklung des Aristophanes und der Komödie überhaupt zu beurteilen, müssten wir eine mythologische Travestie und ein Stück des Pherekrates, wie die *Korianno*, kennen: so ist es bitter, aber unvermeidlich, dass wir resignieren." This passive state of resignation, however, may well become one of positive opposition if modern students of Roman comedy, minimizing this tantalizing evidence of a generalized comedy developing under Sicilian influence in the hands of Crates and Pherecrates in the fifth century, proceed to construct a theory in which Hellenistic comedy appears largely as an issue from Euripidean tragedy.² For weak as the links may be that connect Epicharmus, Crates, and Pherecrates with Hellenistic comedy, they are at

¹ *Sitzb. d. berlin. Akad.* (1911), 485.

² Very reluctantly, in the pages above, I have briefly resumed the evidence of ancient theory, without expecting to add much to the discussion. The proper appreciation, however, of the Euripidean theory seemed to me impossible without once more surveying, I hope conservatively, the opposing view of ancient critics and distinguishing two versions of ancient dogma. The emphasis upon political conditions in one version may be old, as a comparison of Platonius (Kaibel 3/9 ff.) with Ps. Xenoph. *de rep. Ath.* II. 18 suggests; and the aesthetic version does not necessarily exclude the main elements of the political theory. Yet my main interest is not in any precise determination of sources, but in sketching the outlines of an Aristotelian theory in which Old and Middle comedy are sharply differentiated, with proper provision for foreshadowings of the Middle comedy even in the fifth century, and these foreshadowings not primarily in the aggressive triad, Cratinus, Eupolis, and Aristophanes. Very likely, if we had all the material of comedy before us, we might not accept this Aristotelian theory, for modern procedure, in explaining the development of literary types, is more exact than ancient theory; but it is none the less important to note that, with the exception of a single document to be discussed later, ancient theory that is substantially due to Aristotle has found no place for Euripides in accounting for the development of comedy down to at least the middle of the fourth century.

In a brief survey, written simply as preliminary to a discussion of the Euripidean theory, a full bibliography of the treatment by modern scholars of Sicilian-Attic comedy is out of place. A detailed examination of the question may be expected in a Princeton dissertation, as yet unpublished, entitled *The Transition from Old to Middle Comedy*. Older handbooks of Greek literature, as, for example, Bergk-Peppmueller, followed Aristotle's clue, often exaggerating the value of the evidence. Welcker in his study

least sufficient to induce a sober conservative attitude toward any exclusive emphasis upon Euripidean tragedy, or upon a combination of scurrilous comedy and Euripidean tragedy, as the dominant force in the generation of later comedy. The vogue of the modern theory, however, requires a serious consideration of the bases upon which it rests.

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[To be concluded]

of Epicharmus in *Kleine Schriften* did not hesitate to emphasize the value of Sicilian-Attic comedy. Hasper devoted a loosely written programme (*De Cratete et Pherecrate nov. com. praecursoribus* [Leipzig, 1877]) to the subject. Zielinski, *Die Gliederung d. altatt. Komödie*, 242, endeavored to discriminate a Dorian, mythological, ethico-social, from an Ionic, political-personal, or elfish, comedy. Süss, in his dissertation *De personarum ant. com. Att. usu atque origine* (Bonn, 1905), saw the significance of Crates and Pherecrates, but in *Rh. Mus.*, LXV (1910), 441 ff. emphasized the value of Aristophanes as foreshadowing Hellenistic comedy. The most recent statements of the case by Körte represent the germs of mythological and realistic comedy as existing in Sicilian comedy; he appreciates the importance of Crates and Pherecrates; nor does he fail to emphasize the influence of Euripides though regarding it as setting in late and gradually increasing; cf. *Hermes*, XXXIX (1904), 486, 490; *Burs.-Jahresb.*, CLII (1911), 233, 244, 258; and his popular essay *Die griech. Komödie* (1914), pp. 24 ff., 68 ff. The effect of Leo's studies in Roman comedy is apparent in most of the recent handbooks of Greek literature, as in Christ-Schmid I⁶, 400, in which the influence of the Sicilian comedy of types on Old comedy, particularly on Crates, and then upon Middle and New comedy, it is remarked, "kann zuversichtlich angenommen werden," and "the same influence is probably effective upon the Atellan play"; the force of "zuversichtlich" can be estimated by the full statement of Euripidean influence in the same handbook, II/1⁵, 26 ff.

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THE ANTECEDENTS OF HELLENISTIC COMEDY

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III

There has never been, to my knowledge, a professed attempt to establish by complete logical proof the modern theory of Euripidean influence upon Hellenistic comedy. From more or less happy figures of speech in which Menandrian comedy appears as "die echte Erbin" of Euripidean tragedy,¹ or New comedy as the adopted child of Euripidean tragedy though the natural daughter of Old comedy,² modern critics have passed to analytical studies of various aspects of comedy in which the amount and kind of influence have been assumed as demonstrated facts. Without doubt the present vogue of the theory and of consequent practice is largely due to Leo's masterly studies of Roman comedy, both his critical essays on contaminated plays and on special features like the monologue, and particularly the notable third chapter of his *Plautinische Forschungen*; the effects of his teaching emerge in many dissertations, not only of his own students, but of others influenced by the general trend of investigation. The statements of Leo which I have to review in this study are, many of them at least, inserted in the midst of an argument in this chapter of his *Forschungen* which I cordially approve; the sound logical procedure of establishing the Greek background of Roman comedy through material and style common to Plautus and Euripides is constantly vitiated by the intrusion of statements,

¹ Wilamowitz, *Herakles*², I, 55.

² Leo, *Hermes*, XLIII (1908), 165.

logically unsound, to the effect that Hellenistic comedy is in some way substantially dependent upon Euripidean tragedy, as a consequence of these common elements of content and form.

It is not easy to discover from the rapid generalizations of modern critics what they conceive to have been the precise interrelation of Euripidean tragedy and New comedy, to discern just what evolutionary process, in their view, relates the two types to each other. The clearest statement of the case I find in the words of the protagonist of the theory. Leo says¹ that Euripides robbed tragedy of its sublimity and humanized it; he substituted for simple action complex action, and intrigue with surprising developments, added to the myth bits of everyday experience, created striking and complicated characters to replace the simple heroic figures of myth, laid their souls bare in the storm and stress of emotions, questioned the grounds and the justification of domestic and social relations, and skeptically regarded the divine ordering of the world. Older tragedy had always strongly influenced comedy; when comedy was deprived of its rights of free speech and forced to relinquish the form and content of satirical burlesque, "konnte es nicht anders sein als dass sich bei der mächtigen Genossin die Weisung eines neuen Weges holte." So comedy brings to an end the development, started by Euripides, of the heroic into bourgeois drama. I think I rightly represent Leo's idea in saying that this development which he sketches is intended to indicate that comedy does not directly imitate or adapt Euripidean tragedy but somewhat unconsciously continues a line of development initiated by Euripides. Usually in Leo's phraseology comedy works "nach dem Muster" or "in Nachfolge" of tragedy, though occasionally the critic allows himself to speak of direct derivation; but a flat statement of derivation is immediately qualified so as to suggest a less direct and more subtle relation than that of conscious imitation or adaptation.²

¹ *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 99-100.

² *Der Monolog*, 38: "Dass die neue Komödie nicht von der alten, sondern von der Tragödie des Euripides herkommt, ist zu einer billigen Wahrheit geworden. . . . Sie [comedy] war vorausbestimmt, die Nachfolgerin der dem wirklichen Leben genäheren Tragödie zu werden." Leo is of course not responsible for the rash statements of some of his admiring followers: "Sie [New comedy] ist ein bürgerliches Schauspiel, das direkt aus dem euripideischen Drama wird, mit einigen komischen Figuren, die aus dem frühern komischen Drama stammen." (Dieterich, *Pulcinella*, 52.)

To these statements of Leo I have not the slightest objection; they seem to me in the main true and illuminating, and they mark a great advance over the days when the interpretation of Plautus was a matter of *Trivialerklärung*. But when these descriptive statements issue in a method of critical procedure that assumes a norm of Euripidean art as a standard by which to measure what is Greek and what is Roman in Plautus, I think that Leo has carried us farther than is warranted by the attainable evidence of the nature and the extent of this somewhat elusive process of continuation. If Old comedy was never anything but Aristophanes, and if the content and the form of New comedy are in a large number of important specific aspects Euripidean, undoubtedly there is much to be said for the issue in practice of these illuminating descriptive phrases. In my previous paper¹ I have reiterated that Aristotle found something besides Aristophanic comedy in the fifth century. My present purpose is to indicate the value, in my opinion, of those larger features of form and content which modern critics find to be Euripidean when they appear in Hellenistic comedy. Only by a careful estimate of the validity of the common elements, as they may bear upon the interdependence of the two types, is the current critical procedure in the analysis of Roman comedy to be justified or corrected; and I may add only also by an equally careful consideration of the elements which Euripidean tragedy and comedy do not share, although this aspect of the case cannot be a prominent part of my review of the current theory.

IV

Intending only to restrict and define the extent and the nature of Euripidean influence I am not embarrassed by the one bit of external evidence which modern critics can quote in support of their general contention. In the last quarter of the third century Satyrus, a Peripatetic, wrote a biography of Euripides in the form of an Aristotelian dialogue; he says² that Euripides and New comedy have

¹ *CP*, XII (1917), 405 ff. May I correct a sentence on p. 414, l. 7; it should read: "Whether these and other professional types, if there were such, were taken over from Peloponnesian Megara to the Sicilian habitat of Epicharmus, etc."

² On Satyrus as a biographer cf. Leo, *Griech.-röm. Biographie*, 118 ff. For the text of the document cf. *Oxyrhynch. Pap.*, IX, no. 1176, fr. 39, col. vii (also von Arnim, *Supplementum Euripideum*, 5); for critical discussion Leo, *Nachr. d. götting. Gesell.* (1912), 281 f.

in common: (1) Certain interrelations of domestic characters, husband and wife, father and son, master and slave; presumably he has in mind the conflicts between the two members of each of these pairs, but the papyrus fragment has a gap at this point. (2) Three motives used in the peripety: (a) the betrayal of maidens, (b) substitution of infants, (c) recognition by means of rings and necklaces. (3) The *στίχοι συντάξεως λεκτικῆς*; here the papyrus is not wholly clear, and the Greek furnished by the first editors can hardly be construed.¹ These elements which Satyrus enumerates will concern us presently in our discussion of the modern theory. At the moment we observe simply that Satyrus is an Aristotelian; his style and terminology are Aristotelian; but Aristotle himself found in Sicilian-Attic comedy, not in Euripides, so far as extant evidence shows, a background for Middle comedy. Satyrus is applying in broad and general terms (far different in quantity and kind from the large number of specific minutiae set forth by modern critics) to New comedy as a whole what Quintilian asserts of Menander in saying that he admired and followed Euripides, though in a totally different type of literature. These are broad generalizations, the soundness of which has been impaired only by modern analysis.²

V

The lack of organized argument naturally leads to vagueness, ambiguity, contradictions, in the statements of modern critics. Nowhere, so far as I recall, does Leo ever generalize in a way to give the

¹ This third common element is interpreted by Leo to be "die Farbe der gewöhnlichen Redeweise"; Leo supplements the text of the papyrus, von Arnim boldly reconstitutes it. I find it hard to believe that even a Hellenistic biographer would imply that New comedy owes to Euripidean tragedy the simple style of ordinary usage as distinguished from the elevated diction and manner of pre-Euripidean tragedy. Satyrus quotes a new fragment of Philemon to prove his statement: *Εὐριπίδης πού φησιν οὕτως, ὅς μόνος δύναται λέγειν*. Might not *λέγειν* in the fragment and *σύνταξις λεκτικῆς* in Satyrus refer to argumentative speeches? Is it not the organized speech on general themes that Satyrus finds both in Euripides and in New comedy?

² It is important to observe that both Quintilian (x. 1. 69) and Satyrus clearly indicate that their inferences are drawn, not from a critical comparison of the two types of poetry such as modern criticism has developed (cf. e.g., Sehrt, *De Menandro Euripidis imitatore*, Giessen, 1912), but from specific testimony by the comic poets in the texts of their plays. So Quintilian represents Menander as often testifying, "ut saepe testatur," to his admiration of Euripides, and Satyrus quotes a fragment in which Philemon refers to Euripides by name; cf. also Philemon, frag. 130 Kock.

impression that love, as furnishing situations and motives in comedy, is anything but realistic.¹ Yet the notion prevails that in some way or other Euripides' notable interest in love as a dramatic motive is responsible for the sentimental theme in comedy. Koerte, for example, in a recent popular essay² maintains that "das Liebesmotiv" is furnished to comedy by tragedy; he then mentions Phaedra, Stheneboea, Medea, and concludes by saying that if one changes the names of the heroic characters in the *Helena*, one gets "ein bürgerliches Schauspiel." Specialists writing popular essays should always be charitably treated, but Sehrt³ in his comparative study of Menander and Euripides cannot claim exemption; he asserts that Menander learned from Euripides that jealousy and adultery were convenient means of promoting dramatic complications, that Menander discovered these devices in the *Eifersuchtsdramen* of Euripides; all this a propos of the facts that Polemon in Menander's *Perikeiromene* is in love with Glycera and treats her brutally, and that Polemon is a jealous rival of Moschion, Glycera's brother; the love of brother for sister in this play Sehrt relates to the same theme in Euripides' *Aeolus*; the recognition of brother and sister in the same play he relates to Euripides' *Electra* and *Iph. Taur.*; and then, as a convincing conclusion he asserts that Menander "mixed" these two Euripidean themes, the love of brother for sister, and the recognition theme, and lo! the *Perikeiromene* was made. Menander's dependence upon Euripides seems to me very substantial, but Sehrt's method of approach results in a neat job of carpentry rather than in proper appreciation of a poet's art.

Just how the illicit love affairs of Phaedra and Stheneboea led to the premarital frailty of respectable women, or the amours of courtezans, in comedy is a development, or an upheaval, that I find myself unable to elaborate. Polemon is brutal and jealous as is Medea, but I see only in real life the background for Polemon's cruel shearing of Glycera's hair, and for the whole situation I find the only necessary source in such everyday events as Aristophanes sets forth in *Plutus* 1013 ff. If Polemon were a jealous husband planning to kill his

¹ *Pl. Forsch.*², 143: "Die Liebesgeschichten sind von den Komikern dem Leben entnommen und als Stoff und Triebkräfte der Handlung verwendet worden."

² *Die griech. Komödie* (1914), 69 f.

³ *Op. cit.*, 25.

children, I might think of Euripides' *Medea*; otherwise I shall be as likely to see the influence of Euripides here as I do in the jealous lover of Theocritus' fourteenth idyl. Whatever may be said for the *Helena*, I object to the implication that the reunited husband and wife of that tragedy have any relation to the reunited lovers of almost all the love plots of comedy until somebody proves that this comic plot is in the large nothing but a tragic scheme of action made over by comic poets.

Some of the absurdity in current statements would be removed if the critics would distinguish between love as a theme, love as a dramatic motive, and the psychology and pathology of love as revealed in action and portrayal of character. In my view nearly all Hellenistic types of poetry are marked by the emergence of love as a dominant theme; in no one of them does Euripidean practice suffice to explain, primarily or exclusively, the phenomenon. As a general manifestation I explain it as the emergence of what had hitherto been an undercurrent; it did not generally emerge in poetry of the fifth century, for regarded as a morbid condition it was not an elevated theme; Aristophanic comedy might have employed it if special conditions had not diverted comedy into other channels; it may, for aught I know, have been used in fifth-century comedy of the Sicilian-Attic type; it may always have existed as a theme of popular tale and of any realistic or unsophisticated form of literature during the fifth century, as it certainly did before the fifth century. In the Hellenistic period realistic types of poetry developed, and epic and tragedy removed the ban. As a mere theme love is inevitable in comedy of the later period. In this development Euripides is simply in advance of his time. But it is quite possible that, being in advance of his time, Euripides did supply hints in the use of love as a motive in drama, and in the elaboration of the theme. Unfortunately, I look in vain for Phaedras and Stheneboeas. Women in comedy are seldom allowed to elaborate the emotion of love; the men reveal it in action without much laying bare of souls; the general conditions, psychological and pathological, and the consequences, social and personal, are sometimes put forth in set speeches, but these general conditions are broadly Greek and Hellenistic as well as Euripidean.

The surest way, in my view, to secure a proper perspective regarding this and other elements of the content of comedy is to study them as so many ingredients of the comic plot, and to raise at the outset of the discussion the large question: What evidence have we that the tragic plot, or representative Euripidean plots, fully or in large part, affected the plots of comedy? From this broad standpoint I should like to consider the various matters which the critics usually isolate under the rubrics of love, betrayal of maidens, exposure of infants, substitution of infants, kidnapping, recognition of lost, stolen, and exposed children, intrigue, and other material elements. These are substantial factors in the structure of the plot in comedy, and they should not be regarded apart from the plot in the large function of furnishing the framework of action.

There is general agreement that all these elements of the plot accord with the actuality of contemporary life. Literary tradition is at best only a contributing factor, though perhaps a large one in some cases. That this literary influence issued from tragedy rather than from any other literary type is made very probable, not only by the opportunity afforded many generations of comic poets of seeing tragedies on the stage, but by the continuous tradition of mythological comedy down to the end of the middle period. Starting with Epicharmus, some of whose plays may have been based upon oral tradition or epic sources rather than upon tragic treatment of myth, and continuing at Athens through the fifth century though somewhat submerged by political satire, mythological comedy becomes the favorite type of comedy in the transition period just before the comedy of manners, sentiment, and intrigue is thoroughly established in the new period. These travesties of mythological tragedy certainly brought upon the comic stage with considerable frequency many of the motives and situations familiar now to readers of Roman comedy, such as love, betrayal of maidens, substitution of infants, exposure and recognition of children. Aristophanes' *Kokalos*, if we are to credit the loose statement of his biographer, contained the themes of betrayal and recognition and "all the other themes that Menander imitated." Anaxandrides' general employment of love and betrayal (which may perhaps be safely inferred from Suidas' description of him as the inventor of these themes) can hardly

be separated from the almost exclusive interest in mythological comedy which the titles of his plays reveal.

Such conditions supply a very substantial a priori basis for the modern theory, if it be granted, as seems not unlikely, that in the transition period Euripidean plots were chosen extensively for the purposes of travesty. But it is difficult to discover from the generalizations of the critics just what happened, in their view, when the plots of a comedy of manners came to be cultivated, and replaced the mythological comedy hitherto so highly favored. Were the humanized divinities of mythological comedy now dubbed Chremes and Pheidon? Were the amours of a Zeus, for example, thereby made over into everyday sentimental situations? Did a god's sweet-hearts immediately transmute themselves into courtezans, or into compromised young women of a higher social status than the courtezans? I should myself be quite willing to admit that the humanizing of heroic figures in travesty might easily have opened the way toward a comedy of manners; nor should I be deterred by Plautus' *Amphitruo* from granting that on occasion a courtesan might have found her way into a comedy of manners through being part of a travesty of Zeus' notorious amours. Yet the abundant historical evidence of courtezans in contemporary life and the mystery of Pherecrates' *Korianno* prevent my according any great value to the influence of tragedy in this small particular.

The only way that I see of avoiding idle speculation is to compare the plots of comedy and tragedy. Completeness is impossible in these prolegomena; nor can idle speculation be altogether avoided; but a few illustrative examples may at least disclose the general line of thought that my own mind takes. The plot of Euripides' *Auge* may have been as follows:¹ At a nocturnal festival of Athena, Heracles in a drunken revel violated Auge, a priestess, leaving with her a ring. On the birth of a child her father, discovering her frailty, ordered the infant exposed; the child was brought up by a doe; Auge was threatened with death but Heracles arrived opportunely and, identifying the ring, saved both child and mother. In response to

¹ As usual one is handicapped by fragmentary evidence; it is not certain that this story is the Euripidean plot, or that, if Euripidean, it is complete. Cf. Nauck, *Traç. graec. frag.*², 436 ff.; Wilamowitz, *Anal. Eurip.*, 186 ff. But the story at least illustrates, better than any other single plot, the contribution that was made on occasion by tragedy to comedy.

commands from the oracle of Apollo, Teuthras married Auge and brought up the infant Telephus as his own. I have chosen this plot, not only because it has many of the recurrent elements of the comic plots, but because of its dramatic history. A detail of the play excited, probably, the slur in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1080. Comic poets of the transition period, Philyllius and Eubulus, travestied the story and perhaps the Euripidean plot. It was in Menander's mind when he wrote the *Epitrepontes*; for the slave (583-84 Koerte) quotes a passage from the tragedy in justification of the hero's violence and threatens to quote the entire tragic *ῥῆσις* if Smicrines is not convinced. This continuity in the dramatic tradition may deter anybody from dismissing the common elements of tragic and comic plot as purely accidental, and from stressing too heavily the fact that comedy, apart from tragedy, might have taken the scheme of action from contemporary life.

But what are these common elements, and what is the significance of them? They are the betrayal at a nocturnal festival, the excuse of drunkenness, the ring, the birth and exposure, and the solution through recognition. Now if we compare the extant comedies with this scheme of action we find some of these themes and situations in the *Aulularia*, *Cistellaria*, *Truculentus*, the Greek fragments of Menander; and the theme of recognition is more generously illustrated.¹ But in these Roman plays what do these elements common to tragedy and comedy amount to? It is apparent that (aside from the mere incidental material furnished by the religious festival at night, the drunkenness, the ring) the really basic elements of plot material, viz., the *stuprum*, exposure, and the recognition, simply provide in some comedies the initial stages of complication and the final solution. Yet in the comedies, between the initial stage and the solution, stands a more substantial mass of plot material which nobody can relate to known or conceivable tragic plots. The *Aulularia*, for example, starts with the same presupposition of *stuprum*, committed in a drunken revel at the night festival of Ceres, but the resultant complications arising from the conflict between Megaronides' plans and Lyconides' plight, Euclio and all that issues from

¹ On *stuprum*, the religious festival, and the excuse of drunkenness cf. Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 159; on recognition *ibid.*, 158, and Hoffmann, *De anagnorismo*, Breslau, 1910.

his character, and the solution of all the complications have absolutely no background in tragic plots, but come directly from contemporary life or from earlier comic tradition. Modern critics may find the most perfect phraseological identity between what Lyconides says to justify himself (*Aul.* 794) and *Auge*, frag. 265 Nauck, they may compare the recognition scene in the *Rudens* with that of the *Ion*, or, better, they may observe the exact resemblance in form between the recognition scene of the *Perikeiromene* and corresponding scenes in tragedy, or between the arbitration scene in the *Epitrepontes* and the material of Euripides' *Alope* even down to the grandfather who in both plays, with ironic effects, has the rôle of arbitrator thrust upon him, but the unassailable fact remains that in all these plays which have these points of contact with tragedy the common basic elements of plot structure appear in comedy merely as the beginning or the end, or the beginning and the end, of the structural framework of comic action. And when one adds to this the fact that, outside these plays which have these elements in common with tragedy, there exists a much greater number of comedies with no such community of essential elements, one begins, I think, to get a desirable perspective in estimating the precise relation of comedy to tragedy. Where, in respect to essential factors in plot structure, do the *Asinaria*, *Mercator*, *Mostellaria*, *Pseudolus*, for example, reveal any points of contact with the plots of Euripidean tragedy? Love and betrayal, exposure of children, and recognition are floating elements, the availability of which to initiate and to solve complications comic poets may have learned to a considerable extent from tragedy.

With reservations for the uncertainty regarding the Euripidean plot and the danger of idle speculation I may note, briefly, as a small contribution to our appreciation of Menander rather than to our understanding of Hellenistic comedy in the large, the relation of the *Auge* to the *Epitrepontes*. Menander had the Euripidean plot in mind; he had other tragic plots in mind as, perhaps, the relation of the arbitration scene to the *Alope* makes evident;¹ that he was sensitive to tragic effects and deeply appreciative of Euripides, I see no reason to question. But from a psychological and dramatic stand-

¹ Cf. Fischl, *Hermes*, XLIII (1908), 311.

point the essential effects secured by Menander's plot arise from the fact that the betrayer marries unwittingly his victim, discovers her premarital frailty, and punishes her in ignorance that he is the guilty person; to these are added incidental effects obtained through the connection of the courtesan, Habrotonon, with the action. The story of Auge, as far as I can see, furnishes no starting-point for any of these effects; nor, without begging the whole question of Euripidean influence, do I find, by any play of imagination upon the known plots of tragedy, a more immediate source for this inspiration in tragedy rather than in the concrete experiences of contemporary life. Menander seems to have constructed an effective plot, not by any humanizing of Auge and Heracles, by any mere transference of the tragic story, but by the invention of an entirely different situation and of incidental embellishments in which the tragic story furnishes hardly more than a few threads in a richly woven web of his own devising. If he made a much more powerful tragic situation out of the material than we can imagine as issuing from the story of Auge, that of course may be partially due to his absorbing interest in tragedy;¹ but such an interest is an individual characteristic, which certainly the Greek authors of the *Asinaria*, *Mercator*, *Mostellaria*, and *Pseudolus* do not reveal; nor does Menander always discover it in any such degree.

Modern critics, therefore, have in my opinion exaggerated the amount of Euripidean influence by treating under separate rubrics various motives and situations that, regarded as essential elements of plot structure, represent only a small contribution toward devices for initial complications and ultimate solutions of the plot, and those devices employed in a relatively small number of the extant plays.

¹ Menander's mind, in writing the *Epitrepontes*, must have been full of tragedy; the reference in the arbitration scene (109 Koerte) to themes of exposure and recognition in tragedy, and probably Sophoclean tragedy, is further evidence. Such a reference, however, to literature rather than life may be only a manner of speaking. One remembers Demosthenes' attack (*in Midiam*, sec. 149, p. 563): "who of you doesn't know the unutterable story—it seems like tragedy—the story of his birth?" The writer of the article "Expositio" in Daremberg-Saglio quickly infers that the substitution of children in New comedy is a literary theme and not primarily realistic; it is at least interesting that Demosthenes thinks of tragedy rather than comedy. But inferences of this sort are dangerous; so I observe that the *Iena* in *Asin.* 174 ff. defends her dishonest treatment of the young lover not by contemporary practice, but by an appeal to painting and to poetry!

But the force of my argument is impaired if these critics can prove that the rest of the framework of action, between initial complications and solution, is substantially a continuation of the tragic scheme of action. Now to a limited extent modern students have undertaken to establish this larger indebtedness to Euripidean tragedy. Although it is impossible to generalize in describing the comic plot, it is fair to say that the middle part of the comic plot, and the bulk of the action, is in many cases a plot of intrigue devised to relieve the pair of lovers from the initial complications and sometimes involving them in further complications. This plot of intrigue the critics relate to such Euripidean intrigues as we find in the *Ion*, *Iph. Taur.*, and *Helena*. The validity of their contention may be seen from the close resemblance between parts of the *Helena* and the *Miles Gloriosus*.

Whoever seeks the bridge, says Leo,¹ which leads from Euripides to New comedy may confidently start from the *Helena*. He admits that it is naturally only a happy accident that the reflection of a definite tragedy is mirrored in a single comedy; does he mean by this that the Greek comic poet did not necessarily imitate consciously and immediately the *Helena*? If so, we have simply to inquire what the elusive process of continuation amounts to in this case. The two plays have as their common theme the reunion of a pair of loyal lovers, in the tragedy a married couple, in the comedy a pair of lovers. Obviously this is the most commonplace scheme of any sentimental plot with a happy ending; Greek comedies, Greek romances employ it frequently; in tragedy it is a rare phenomenon, but Euripides is given to happy endings. Leo, wisely, does not emphasize this broad community of theme. But he does stress these specific points. In both plays the heroine, accompanied by servants bearing presents or offerings furnished by the duped villain of the piece, follows on shipboard her husband or lover, who is disguised as a sailor, as a part of a plan to fool the villain; in this situation the intriguer (in the tragedy, Helen; in the comedy, an intriguing slave) in a long dialogue with the villain plays with danger and intensifies in the spectator the feeling that it is a critical emergency. There are

¹ *Pl. Forsch.*, 165 ff. In Leo's view (*Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 101), the interest of the comic poets in intrigue was a prime factor in the removal of the chorus from comedy; this withdrawal of the chorus Euripides had already found convenient in the *Helena*.

parallels in phraseology and general thought: Helen says to the villain equivocally: "This day shall prove my gratitude to you"; the intriguing slave in the comedy says to the dupe: "Today of all days you shall know, shall surely say that I have proved myself devoted to your service." In both plays just before the trick is played, its success is seriously endangered by the proposal on the part of the dupe to do something that will defeat the plan; in the tragedy the dupe inquires if he should not better go with the intriguers, in the comedy he is on the point of commanding them to remain; and in both cases the intriguer meets this dangerous suggestion successfully and averts disaster. Finally, in both plays the dupe is informed of the success of the trick by one of the servants who attended the intriguers and carried the presents or offerings furnished by the dupe.

Here is an amount and kind of evidence which may well encourage the source-hunter. It is of course possible to state the case much less favorably if one is not obsessed by the theory of Euripidean influence. One may perhaps remark that the use of intrigue, and of the special sort of trick, with the lover disguised as a sailor and the escape by ship, is not so significant as Leo thinks. For the conditions and scene-settings of both plays make escape by sea imperative, and the escape by sea occasions the particular type of trick in which the husband or lover is disguised as sailor; yet these conditions and the scene-setting in the comedy cannot be attributed to the influence of the tragedy; for the kidnapping of the girl in the comedy, the consignment of the slave by pirates to the villain in Ephesus, are no part of the tragic plot of the *Helena* or any other tragedy, but are taken from contemporary experience.¹ And once this is granted, many of the less fundamental features become less significant than they would be if the more essential basic factors of the comic situation were inevitably related to the tragic scheme of action. One may then say, for instance, that if at the critical moment in both plots the intriguer plays with danger, and if in both dramas the dupe unconsciously threatens disaster to the plans of the loving pair, this

¹ For the realism of the details cf. Legrand, *Daos*, 265 ff. I do not intend to deny that kidnapping and piracy may also have had at this time a background in literature, as the story of Eumaeus and his nurse in *Odyssey* xv. 403 ff. may well suggest, but certainly tragedy did not furnish these presuppositions of the comic plot.

is no more than the most elementary dramatic device to create desirable suspense, and the commonplaceness will be only further illustrated if a similar thought and phrase recurs in both plays in the elaboration of the dialogue. Again, if a slave in each play among those who attend the intriguers, and carry presents or offerings furnished by the dupe himself, brings back to the dupe the news that he has been fooled, one may calmly ask who else would naturally bring back the announcement that is necessary to the conclusion of the action. And if it is still demanded why there should in both plays be servants carrying such presents or offerings, one might retort that it is simply to provide a person to bring back word to the dupe. These suggestions of mine, however, are not intended to minimize the value of the evidence but only to restore, if possible, a little of the balance and the sanity of judgment which source-hunters seem rather quickly to lose in the pursuit of their prey.

For argumentative purposes, at least, I prefer to let Leo's statement of the case for the *Helena* stand as it is. To this case the *Iph. Taur.* and *Ion* add nothing; for the former simply offers an intrigue which provides escape by sea, as in the *Helena*, but the content of this intrigue and of that in the *Ion* has nothing whatever to do with the intrigues of comedy so far as the material elements are concerned.¹

¹ The value of the *Helena* for Leo's purposes is enhanced by formal features such as the monologue, which I shall discuss in my next paper. As regards the intrigue another angle to the problem is presented by the mime *Charition* (cf. Winter, *De mimis Oxyrhyn.*, 24 ff.; Knoke, *De Charitio*, 12 ff.). If one is limited to the decipherable parts of the papyrus fragment and denies himself ingenious supplementing of the text and rash conjecture, there is little to be got from this mime for our present purposes. A woman clearly is endeavoring to escape with a brother's help from the coast of India; she has some connection with a temple, possibly of Selene, and is urged to carry off with her votive offerings from the temple, which she refuses to do; the escape is made by ship; the opposing parties are Indians, a king and attendants, and these Indians speak the native dialect; apparently these enemies are befuddled with wine, and the escape thereby achieved. If the woman is a priestess of the moon-goddess, if she is in danger of being sacrificed by the Indian king to that goddess, and is saved by her brother from this fate, the connection with the *Iph. Taur.* is very close though the mime is clearly not intended to be a direct parody of the tragedy. The phraseological parallels between the mime and the tragedy brought out in modern discussion do not greatly impress me. I am much more impressed by the general vulgarity and obscenity, by the use of the native Indian dialect with its obvious relation backward to Aristophanes and the *Poenulus*; the document is slippery evidence until the interrelations of comedy, mime, tragedy, and prose romance are more clearly defined. To me the crude form of unsophisticated romantic tale is more apparent in the mime than any connection with sophisticated literary types.

What, then, is the relation between comedy and Euripidean tragedy? Taking Leo's evidence on its face value I observe that by a happy accident, as Leo puts it, one Latin comedy is closely paralleled by one Euripidean tragedy in respect to the material and general elaboration of a plot of intrigue. I then observe that by an unhappy accident no other Latin comedy with a plot of intrigue has any resemblance to any Euripidean intrigue. In brief the case is that three out of somewhat less than a score of the extant plays of Euripides have a plot of intrigue, that a considerable majority of twenty-six Latin plays have a plot of intrigue, that one Euripidean intrigue is in species closely akin to one Roman comedy, but that the only significant fact is a broad generic resemblance combined with the greatest possible difference in species as regards the material of intrigue in tragedy and comedy. Generalization regarding the comic plot of intrigue is unsafe, but any reader of Latin comedy must admit that the most recurrent scheme of action in comedy presents lovers, prevented from satisfying their desires by various complications, and aided in the slow realization of their hopes by the swindling activity of an intriguing slave or parasite; most often the intriguer's aim is to raise money by his trick; he operates in various ways, with false statements, with agents in disguise, and what not; but neither in the general scheme of intrigue nor the details of its elaboration have the modern critics brought out any possible connection with any of the few intrigue plots of Euripides, save in the single parallel between the *Helena* and the *Miles*. The background in literature of this comic plot of intrigue I do not pretend to know; it seems to me ultimately nothing but the reaction of relatively unsophisticated minds on the facts of environing life; that it may have been cultivated in Sicilian-Attic comedy is possible enough but cannot be demonstrated. Whatever its origin, however, there is no comfort for the Euripidean theory in the most substantial part of the framework of the comic plot; and anybody who imagines that comic poets had to wait for the appearance of the intrigue plays of Euripides before they constructed such a scheme of action seems to me to be wanting in proper appreciation of what an untrained playwright most immediately resorts to when occasion demands a comic play, be it farce, comedy, or *Schauspiel*; if I am not mistaken his readiest

devices are swindling, disguise, and confusion of persons. These elements may at any moment emerge in higher types of literature but they are fundamental in a popular realistic type like comedy.¹

Leaving the essential elements of plot modern critics find even in the incidental situations of the comic action the effect of Euripidean influence. With cases of direct parody of specific tragic scenes we are not concerned, except as those may strengthen the general probability of intimate knowledge of tragedy on the part of the comic poets; here, however, the examples are admittedly few,² and the patent fact is that this later comedy has abandoned a notable means of comic effect in Aristophanic drama. Nor, it seems to me, does the use of elevated diction and general tragic style for comic effect relate to our present inquiry; such burlesque is a regular function of the lower grades of comedy. Only when the scene is serious and seemingly too tragic and emotional for comedy, do the critics offer us anything that requires study. Now such scenes may be recurrent or isolated. Among the former are mad scenes, dreams, resorts of suppliants to altars.³ The examples of the first two are too few to warrant any specific conclusions. With regard to the altar scenes I will simply remark upon a characteristic tendency of modern critics; these altar scenes must be an old feature of myth and tragedy; yet the critic, admitting that here Sophocles as well as Euripides uses the situation, never raises the question whether the very age of the theme should not weaken the weight of Euripidean influence. Phormis, for example, a Sicilian comic poet whom Suidas synchronizes

¹ So the imposter, Zeus-Amphitruo, of myth and tragedy is not the starting-point of the various imposters of comedy; myths that furnish the material of tragedy are popular in origin and will often reveal points of contact with comedy without being the source of the comic material. Lest I should seem to agree with Leo's one opponent in the matter of intrigue, may I say that I have little sympathy with the statement of Suess (*Rh. Mus.*, LXV [1910], 460): "Zu Aristophanes, nicht zu Euripides führt die Entwicklungsgeschichte des klassischen Charakter- und Intriguenspiels." That the activity of the slaves of Demos in Aristophanes' *Knights* or the general evidence of trickiness in Doric farce (cf. von Salis, *De Dor. lud.* *vestigiis*, 17 ff.) is a substantial background for the developed scheme of intrigue in later comedy, I venture to doubt, though this material illustrates the natural tendency of comedy. And to prevent consideration of Atellan plays in this connection I may add that *tricae Atellanae* (Varro *Sat. Men.* 198 Buecheler-Heraeus) has no warrant; the MSS of Nonius read *Tellanae*, which is confirmed by Arnobius 5. 28.

² Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 132 ff. In these matters it is easy to be subjective; in the correspondence between *Cas.* 621 ff. and *Orestes* 1369 ff. I can see nothing but broad burlesque instead of direct connection with a specific scene of tragedy.

³ Cf. Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 159 ff.

with Epicharmus, wrote a travesty of the *Ἰλίου Πόρθησις*; is it likely that he failed to include the scene in which Priam resorts to the altar to escape from Neoptolemus?¹ I simply throw out the question to illustrate the fact that, although most of the elements of comedy for which the critics find a tragic background are the most ancient features of myth, they never consider the possibility that such relation as comedy bears to tragedy in these matters may date back to Epicharmus and his time. When it comes to isolated scenes of tragic content, the problem is different. Logically, the case stands thus in my mind. If one has proved that Euripides determined in a large measure the content and the form of the comic plot, these scenes may be cumulative evidence. But until that is proved, when Leo insists that a guilty slave in comedy cannot escape merited punishment without the poet's being indebted to Euripides' *Hypsipyle*, or that Menander had his eye on *Helena* 1621 ff. when in his *Samia* he represented Demeas as keeping Niceratus from bursting into the house and killing his wife,² I can see nothing but a begging of the whole question at issue.³

The real nub of the question lies in Leo's contention regarding the material of comedy:⁴ "Es sind nach dem Muster der Tragödie durchgeführte Handlungen, darauf angelegt Menschen der gewohnten Art in mannigfache Lebensbeziehung zueinander treten zu lassen. Die Zustände und Erlebnisse sind oft im Laufe des Stückes bedrohlich genug, jede Charaktereinsicht und starkes Pathos kann sich entfalten; das lustige Element ist oft nur durch einzelne Personen vertreten." In other words it is the essentially serious nature of the general situation in comedy and the free play given to emotion that lead critics to look to tragedy of the Euripidean type for an explanation. But I should like to point out that this explanation cannot reasonably

¹ A phluax vase illustrates the use in comedy of this situation but it is idle conjecture (*Arch. Zeit.* [1849], 43) to refer the scene on the vase to Phormis' play.

² *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 104.

³ In this connection would come Satyrus' contention that certain interrelations (left uncertain by the gap in the papyrus) between husband and wife, father and son, master and slave, are shared in common by Euripides and New comedy. My standpoint would be that such interrelations in comedy develop as part of a realistic plot; Euripides undoubtedly in humanizing tragedy developed similar situations; if in a given scene in comedy, one finds resemblance between comedy and Euripides in specific details that are not commonplace, Satyrus' implication is sound; otherwise the resemblance is fortuitous.

⁴ *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 104.

be found in tragedy if the comic plot is not substantially derived from tragedy, and if that comic plot taken directly from life is in itself of a serious character. To illustrate from the *Captivi*, which seems to many critics simply a tragedy with the addition, for comic relief, of the parasite Ergasilus. The scene is set in wartime; this war is obviously a reflection of conditions in the Hellenistic period; the father has lost two sons, one stolen by a slave, the other taken captive in war; he attempts to redeem the latter by buying up captives whom he may offer in exchange for his captured son; in so doing he accidentally buys his other son, whom unwittingly he treats brutally; out of these fundamental elements various serious situations develop, and consequent emotional scenes. Yet not a single one of these fundamental elements of the plot has any connection whatever with the plots of Euripidean tragedy; they come directly from real contemporary experience as the background of war clearly suggests. But how can any poet make a play out of this material without its being full of threatening situations and naturally issuing in pathetic scenes? The most that can be said for the influence of tragedy, under these conditions, is that once the plot of comedy, derived from real life, provided this generally pathetic and tragic situation, the comic poet conceivably took hints from any tragic poet in details of technique, in elaborating pathetic elements. But the substantial material, the scenes and situations, the pathos, in the large, are an inevitable issue from the chosen scheme of action, and that scheme is independent of Euripides. And, of course, it follows in such a case that comic elements have to be inorganic. The *Captivi* is an extreme case, but the logic of the general conclusion is, I think, unassailable; until the comic plot is proved to be substantially a transference of the tragic plot, the tragic scenes and situations of comedy, in the large, cannot be traced to the influence of tragedy; for they issue naturally and inevitably from a framework of action that itself provides very often nothing but serious and emotional situations.¹ Nor should critics be prepossessed against this explana-

¹ This statement does not conflict at all with an admission that recognition scenes and a few other constituent elements in comedy directly reflect tragedy. Any stock theme of tragedy might have come over into comedy, directly or through mythological comedy, but no serious or tragic situation in comedy as such is inevitably related to Euripidean or other tragedy.

tion of serious and pathetic comedy by the fact that, possibly, in modern literature such comedy has sometimes developed under the influence of tragedy.

The weakness of the modern theory, so far as it deals with the content of comedy and tragedy, seems to me to be admitted by the critics themselves when they frankly avow that the characters of comedy come, not from tragedy, but from real life. Leo,¹ to be sure, asserts that "in der Wahl und Formung des dem allgemeinen menschlichen Erlebnis zu entnehmenden Stoffes war die Tragödie . . . vorangegangen" and illustrates what he means by saying that by mere change of costume plays like the *Ion*, *Helena*, *Iph. Taur.*, may be in the main easily made over into comedies; he represents comic poets as remodelling the form and action of Old comedy on the model of Euripidean tragedy. But in speaking of the characters of comedy, he admits, as everybody must, that the professional types of comedy are unknown to tragedy, and of the domestic rôles he expressly says:² "Es ist nur das Leben mit den typischen Figuren der Familie und des Lebensalters." The fineness of characterization he regards as wanting in tragedy, and the stereotyping he ascribes to constant handling by generations of comic poets. If comedy is at all substantially indebted to tragedy for its content, it is singular that no characters have come over into comedy from tragedy; modern critics would perhaps reply that Euripides, by humanizing heroes and gods and the situations of myth, accidentally provided situations and motives which were useful to comic poets without providing characters; the characters of comedy, furnished by a realistic scheme of action, already accorded, so far as domestic rôles are concerned, with the humanized figures of Euripidean tragedy. But granting this to be the case, may I point out how difficult it is to prove that the motives and situations of comedy, since they develop naturally in connection with the realistic characters, have any substantial relation to corresponding situations and motives in tragedy? A recognition of this difficulty might reveal to the critics that they are in serious danger, throughout their arguments, of simply begging the entire question of Euripidean influence.

¹ *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 101.

² *Ibid.*, 105 ff.

The admission of modern critics regarding the characters of comedy affects only the rôles *qua* rôles. It is still possible for them to maintain, and this they often do maintain, that the content or the technique of character treatment is Euripidean. Comments along these lines are scattered and various, and I can only make some strictures on representative cases to illustrate the difference in my own standpoint. Leo,¹ for example, asserts that the philosophizing slave in comedy is taken directly from tragedy. Now Onesimus, a slave, in the final scenes of the *Epitrepontes* philosophizes; his philosophy is contemporary Epicureanism; is he, as a philosophizing slave, Euripidean? As I read Euripides, freemen and slaves moralize and philosophize, often at undue length and in digressory form; in real life, to my thinking, the servile class is much given to moralizing. As an Epicurean, the slave Onesimus seems to me unnatural, and I find the explanation in contemporary philosophy for this unnatural feature of the content of his remarks. As a moralizer² he seems to me realistic. As a digressory declaimer he seems to me Euripidean. In brief, a flat statement that the philosophizing slave in comedy is Euripidean exaggerates the degree of indebtedness, and overlooks the truth, which these criticisms of mine are intended in general to illustrate, that Hellenistic comedy is a complex phenomenon instead of being Euripidean tragedy with comic appurtenances. Legrand, in discreet questions, implies that the good courtezans of comedy are so many Andromaches and Laodameias, that Medea taught Menander's Leucadian woman the madness of jealousy, that courtezans who consult sorceresses are modeled after Medea and Deianeira, who employed philtres to revenge themselves, that Selenium in the *Cistellaria* is languid and

¹ *Pl. Forsch.*, 132.

² The moralizing slave of Euripides is illustrated by *Helena* 725-26:

κακὸς γὰρ ὅστις μὴ σέβει τὰ δεσπότην
καὶ συγγέγηθε καὶ συνῶδιναι κακοῖς.

This compact generalization reminds one of the elaborate preachments of *Aul.* 587 ff., *Men.* 966 ff., *Most.* 858 ff. But can anybody regard the comic passages as mere expansions of the tragedian's brief generalization? This moralizing loyal slave is realistic, though stereotyped by literary tradition. Euripides and comedy are, independently of each other, bourgeois and realistic. Euripides stops at the brief generalization; tragedy in general would not admit the undignified enlargement of the theme. Comedy freely enlarges, not the tragic theme, but the commonplace character and situation.

neglects her personal appearance because Phaedra is similarly languid and neglectful.¹ The last three items, in which the commonplaces of Greek life and human experience are used to bolster up the Euripidean theory, I do not care to dignify by any discussion. The contention regarding the good courtesan I am willing to consider when any evidence is forthcoming, but being convinced that the bad courtesan is proved to be realistic by abundant contemporary evidence and perhaps, as a comic character, established in comedy as early as Pherecrates, I must in the meantime assume that the good courtesan is equally realistic, if slightly idealized and somewhat extravagantly employed for dramatic convenience. Somewhat different from the content and technique of character treatment is the economic function of characters in the elaboration of the action. Little has yet been done toward a study of this aspect of comedy, but there is danger that future students will, as usual, start with the presupposition of Euripidean influence instead of impartially studying both types of drama. So, for example, Ahlers,² in concluding a study of the rôle of confidant in tragedy, asserts that tragedy is the school of comedy in respect to this rôle, wisely adding that comparisons may not be drawn between the two types "ohne Weiteres." I should suggest that, in comparing tragedy and comedy, one should remember that the confidential rôle is a technical device shared by popular tale, myth, tragedy, comedy, and Hellenistic novel, and that one must reckon with the possibility that at the end of the fourth century, or even earlier, it was stock material of literary art. A different precaution would lead to surer results than have been attained by students of the messenger in comedy,³ and this precaution, I think, has a broad application. In studying tragedy and comedy in respect to features of technique critics seem to overlook the fact that certain conditions of the stage and theater are bound to bring about similar technique in tragedy and comedy. So, for example, the messenger per se is required by the limitations of a fixed

¹ Legrand, *Daos*, 317 ff.

² *Die Vertrautenrolle in d. gr. Trag.* (Giessen, 1911), 68.

³ Beyer, *De scaenîs com. Att. vet. quibus quae ad actionem spectant narrantur, non aguntur* (Göttingen, 1912); Weissmann, *De servi currentis persona ap. com. Rom.* (Giessen, 1911); Wagner, *De nuntiis comicis* (Breslau, 1913).

stage-setting, quite apart from any other considerations. Parodies of the tragic messenger may be found in Aristophanes and in Plautus, but the comic messenger is inevitable even if there had never been any tragedy. Once this is granted, no amount of resemblance in small particulars can outweigh the outstanding facts that messengers in Aristophanes and Hellenistic comedy are organic rôles, not relatively inorganic rôles as in tragedy, and that tragic messengers are characterized by long-winded speeches while in comedy, except for a few cases of parody, the messengers' speeches are delivered with the directness and brevity of realism. The differences rather than the resemblance are the significant features.

A much broader indebtedness to Euripides is sketched in Leo's carefully framed sentence:¹ "Es ist bekannt und im Zusammenhang der attischen Kunst mit dem Leben tief begründet, dass die Komödie des Menander und Philemon . . . in der Welt- und Lebensanschauung, deren Spiegel sie ist, mehr in der euripideischen Tragödie als in der alten Komödie wurzelt." Later,² he discerns three streams of influence, contemporary life, Euripidean tragedy, and contemporary ethics, the last a continuation of the same stream of influence that fertilized Euripidean thought. If such a recognition of the complex situation in Hellenistic comedy marked Leo's other utterances, and if critical procedure in treating Roman comedy corresponded to such statements, I should be relieved of my present task. Furthermore, in the details of his subsequent argument,³ Leo often stresses form rather than substance. Yet, admirable as these statements are, I miss at the outset a recognition of the fact that the critical attitude toward life and the ordering of the world, and its expression in the proposals of drastic reform, are inherent in Aristophanic comedy and in Utopian comedy of the fifth century. Is not the spirit of such pronouncements that of the Aristophanic parabasis? Does not the betterment of Athenian society and politics serve as a substantial background for the *Weltverbesserung* of Hellenistic comedy? Euripides, like New comedy, puts these programs in the mouths of individual actors in the form of somewhat digressory declamations, not in the mouths of a chorus. This point of resemblance is important, though I must confess that I should be interested

¹ *Pl. Forsch.*, 113.

² *Ibid.*, 126.

³ *Ibid.*, 113-31.

in knowing how a relatively chorusless Sicilian-Attic comedy in the fifth century expressed this same critical attitude.

In details Leo's material and inferences may occasionally be enriched and clarified; deeper probing may lead to different conclusions. So, for example, he observes¹ acutely the resemblance, in frequent attacks upon social and professional groups, between Euripides and New comedy. Scurrilous broadsides aimed at procurers, bankers, *scurrae*, fishdealers, as classes of society, are paralleled by Euripides' well-known thrusts at athletes and heralds and *rhetoires*. But Leo omits mentioning that Euripides is only extending the range of attacks on the *manteis*, familiar to readers of the *Oed. Rex* and *Antigone* 1035.² He does not tell us that Aristophanes attacks the *rhetoires* (cf. Plato, frag. 186), and I cannot see that Aristophanes³ is any more likely to be influenced by Euripides in this passage (*Plutus* 567) than was Demosthenes (xxiv. 124). Eupolis attacks the *strategoï* (frags. 117, 205), and how much early iambic poets may have anticipated comedy in this satirical tendency can only be guessed from Archilochus (frag. 58 Bergk). The deeper significance of the whole matter may be suggested if one follows back the attack on the *manteis*, which is a commonplace of tragedy. It is the Sicilian comic poet, Epicharmus, who attacks the *manteis* in frag. 9 Kaibel; and it is probable that back of Epicharmus in the tradition is Aristoxenus of Selinus,⁴ whom Epicharmus knew as an iambograph (cf. Epich. frag. 88 Kaibel). In other words the earliest evidence of the whole general feature traces a possible line of tradition from early satirical poetry through Sicilian comedy to later comedy,

¹ *Ibid.*, 131.

² Leo seems to make much of the stereotyped use, by Euripides and the comic poets, of *genus* and γένος in these diatribes; yet this passage of the *Antigone* has the same word, and to compare only *Orestes* 895 and *Curculio* 499 in this connection distorts the relation between Euripides and comedy.

³ The style of Aristophanes is not always that of New comedy; but the passage of the *Plutus* 567 is a close parallel; other ways of securing the same ends are illustrated by *Plutus* 30-31 and 160 ff. Of course it has been often noted that the attack on Socrates is directed against a group or type, rather than the individual, but that is another matter. Some of the material used here I owe to Mr. W. A. Rae, who is preparing a study of such attacks on social and professional groups as they appear in satire, comedy, tragedy, and epigram.

⁴ Aristoxenus ap. Hephaest. p. 49.4: *τις ἀλαζονίαν πλεῖστον παρέχει τῶν ἀνθρώπων; τοὶ μάντεις*. The meter seems to be anapaestic; nor is Archilochus' attack on the *strategos* in iambic verse.

and tragedy may be simply a side issue in the whole story. One may perhaps wonder how much of the supposed relation of comedy to Euripides would disappear if we had Epicharmus.

In the broader aspects of this critical attitude toward life and society the mere admission that contemporary life and contemporary ethics are contributing factors appreciably reduces the amount of Euripidean influence. It is, as Leo says, "die euripideische Weise," the manner rather than the matter, that appears in Hellenistic and Roman comedy. The characters are much given to general philosophizing and to reformatory proposals, and there are often points of contact in phraseology. Leo's evidence suffices to establish this manner as Greek rather than Roman, but whether it is important that Philemon took over from Euripides this style of proposing reforms in the arrangement of the world and of life and developed it in comedy,¹ is not so immediately clear. What is the peculiar Euripidean manner? As Leo defines it, the reformer as a self-appointed lawgiver proposes a betterment of the world, an improvement of existing law and custom, which cannot be realized and appears paradoxical in comparison with present arrangements;² Leo's examples show, in phraseology, a constant recurrence to set forms of expression: verbs of obligation, *nomos* and *lex*, conditional forms like "hoc si ita fiat, mores meliores parent" (*Aul.* 492). The material Leo gathers is rich; yet I am skeptical of its significance. So, for example, he generously provides in a footnote³ material that proves that at least the conditional formula appears, not only in Euripides and New comedy, but in elegy, historical prose, oratory, and didactic treatise; and I begin to wonder if the *nomos* and *lex* are anything more than a natural resort of the legal-minded Greek and Roman. Spontaneous generation may have to be included in the final appraisal of the material. So if I wished to propose a needed reform I should easily, in ignorance of Leo's material, express myself in the words: "If classical philologists would less hastily draw inferences from parallel passages, their conclusions would be sounder." Not being legal-minded I neglect to propose a law; but

¹ *Op. cit.*, 122. Satyrus, I think, anticipated Leo in this inference (cf. above, p. 116, n. 1), with evidence from Philemon's text. Nor do I mean to deny that these reformatory programs are as such essentially Euripidean.

² *Ibid.*, 118.

³ *Ibid.*, 117, n. 1.

I am proposing a fantastic rearrangement of current procedure that will not be realized, and in a commonplace conditional formula. By this momentary flippancy, however, I do not presume to demolish the structure erected by Leo's discriminating analysis; I only ask that into the ultimate evaluation of this and other aspects of the resemblance between Euripides and New comedy there should not enter too much laboring of the eternal commonplace.

The protagonist of the Euripidean theory is, from my standpoint, much more cautious in his statements than many of his disciples. At times he says,¹ regarding comedy, that "die Form war durch die Tragödie gegeben, der Inhalt war grade der Stoff des täglichen Lebens." For expository purposes, it is not convenient for me to treat form and content altogether apart from each other; but hitherto I have been stressing the point that the material of comedy has little or no substantial relation to Euripidean tragedy; it remains to consider the stronger supports of the modern theory, the coherent form of later comedy, the prologue and monologue, the various devices of technique which Euripides seems to share with the comic poets.

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¹ *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.*, I, 101.

[To be concluded]

THE ANTECEDENTS OF HELLENISTIC COMEDY

By HENRY W. PRESCOTT

VI

Even if, as I have suggested,¹ the indebtedness of comedy to Euripides in the material of plot is not so large in amount or so significant in kind as modern critics have represented, it still remains quite possible that in form comedy is dependent upon Euripidean tragedy. Into a mold provided by a different type of literature comedy may have poured a new content. Indeed it is undoubtedly the striking contrast between the looser epirrhematic and episodic structure of Aristophanic comedy and the organic coherence of Hellenistic comedy, as seen in the Roman copies, that has led modern scholars to reject the ancient theory in the prolegomena and to stress heavily the broad resemblance, in point of unity, between later comedy and Euripides. Nor do the variations in the structure of Aristophanic comedy effected by the postponement of the *agon* to the second half of the play, and by the diminished rôle of the chorus in the *Ecclesiastusae* and the *Plutus*, very appreciably lessen the gap in this respect between Aristophanic and Hellenistic comedy.

Taking organic structure in the broadest sense, before we immediately accept the Euripidean theory, must we not ask ourselves, in view of the fact that there is no full and specific relation between the plots of Euripides and those of the later comedy of manners, whether the comic plot of the later period, without any immediate intervention of earlier or contemporary tragedy, does not bring into the comic drama at once a degree of coherent structure that the mere themes of Aristophanic comedy made impossible in the scurrilous plays of the fifth century? These comic plots of the fourth and later centuries are not homogeneous; the twenty-six Roman plays reveal a variety of plots, and the Greek titles and fragments increase this variety. The comedy of manners, with which alone we are at present concerned, may have been a renaissance of one kind of Sicilian-Attic comedy, or it may have issued immediately from the private life

¹ CP, XIII (1918), 113 ff.

of the fourth century. Its precise origin does not matter for our present purpose. Of its various plots a common one, which we may use for illustration, is the story of a young lover prevented from indulging his love for a courtesan by obstacles, usually of a pecuniary sort; the lover himself, or a slave, or parasite obtains the required financial help, usually through some swindling intrigue, and, often further assisted by the discovery of the courtesan's free birth, attains his end.¹ That such a plot is the issue of any slow literary evolution is difficult for me to believe. The broad outline of this story offers in itself a beginning, middle, and end, with obstacles and means of solution that are easily varied and multiplied.

It is quite superfluous for tragedy to superimpose upon this type of plot a general coherence and logical organization which it already possesses. It is, on the other hand, quite true that mythological comedy,² which had prevailed in the period immediately preceding the vogue of the comedy of manners, had in many instances acquired an organic structure by being a travesty of well-organized tragedy; and one cannot easily say how conscious of the advantages of an organic form comic poets may have become through constant witnessing of tragic dramas as well as by intermittent perversions of tragic plots. My point is merely that the material of the comic plots is almost entirely independent of tragedy, and that the unity, in a broad sense, is possibly furnished, without any long period of artistic development, by the simple realistic tale of human experiences.

¹ The theme is a variant of the eternal commonplace which Post (*Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.*, XXIV [1913], 112) reduces to a formula. The broad similarity to the plots of later Greek romances is obvious. The romances themselves, however, are often called *dramata* by their authors; this implication of dramatic influence upon the romances makes it difficult to assert that early prose fiction, no longer extant, contributed to the material of comedy. But the possibility is always open; for interesting reflections of Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, 118 ff.; Bousset, *Ztschr. für die neutestamentl. Wiss.*, V (1904), 18 ff.; Mendell, *CP*, XII (1917), 161 ff.; and specially Thiele, *Hermes*, XLVIII (1913), 536, n. 1, 539, n. 1.

² The salient facts regarding mythological comedy seem to me to be that (1) oral tale and epic must have brought some unity into mythological comedy before tragedy exerted any influence; (2) that the influence of tragedy was exerted probably as early as the time of Epicharmus; (3) that mythological comedy was probably infinitely varied, (a) as illustrated by the *Plutus*, which suggests the loose unity provided by the application of a legend with allegorical implications to contemporary life, (b) by the *Dionysalexandros*, in which fantastic perversion of myth could hardly have promoted unity at all, (c) by the *Amphitruo*, which shows the high degree of unity attainable through the fusion of a tragic plot with a comedy of errors.

Politics, literature, and philosophy did not supply Aristophanes with themes that were inherently dramatic and easily organized into effective dramatic chapters, but typical experiences of real life, such as the recurrent plots of New comedy reveal, hardly need the impress of tragedy before they can assume at least a considerable degree of organic unity.

However abstract and a priori this reasoning is (as it must be in the dearth of positive evidence), it is interesting to observe that before the middle of the fourth century the general coherence of the comedy of manners is recognized by a comic poet, Antiphanes; the invention of the presuppositions, of the facts of the plot, of the exposition, and of the catastrophe, in comedy as well as in tragedy, he seems to view in a detached and conscious fashion and to describe them in terms that to some extent suggest an almost academic attitude toward dramatic structure and an apparatus of technical labels. He is referring to the advantages of tragedy in dealing with stories familiar to the audience, supplied with characters whose names and experiences are already known, and in having the *mechane* available for emergency; in contrast therewith he puts the comic poets who have to *invent* everything—new names, presuppositions, plot, catastrophe, exposition. It should be clearly understood that the fragment refers to the invention of the *facts* of exposition, catastrophe, presuppositions, and main action; the *form* of the comic plot, apparently, is assumed to be approximately that of the tragic plot, and the labels are applicable to both types.¹

Modern criticism, however, does not limit itself to a statement that the coherence, in a very broad sense, of later comedy is largely

¹
 ἡμῖν δὲ ταῦτ' οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ πάντα δεῖ
 εὐρεῖν, ὀνόματα καινὰ, <
 > κᾶπειτα τὰ διφυκμένα
 πρότερον, τὰ νῦν παρόντα, τὴν καταστροφὴν,
 τὴν εἰσβολήν. ἂν ἔν τι τούτων παραλίπη
 Χρέμης τις ἢ Φεῖδων τις, ἐκσυρίττεται.
 Πηλεὶ δὲ ταῦτ' ἔξεστι καὶ Τεύκρῳ ποιεῖν.

[Athen. 222 A, frag. 191, Kock]

The contrast between Chremes and Pheidon, on the one hand, and Peleus and Teucer, on the other, seems to make certain an allusion to a comedy of manners, not to mythological travesty. The complications, the *epitasis* of Donatus on Terence, are covered, if at all, only in τὰ νῦν παρόντα. It is quite possible that Antiphanes is referring mainly to exposition and solution. Ancient literary criticism of comedy,

effected under the influence of the organic structure of Greek tragedy. It undertakes to establish a more specific structural relation between the two types.¹ The Latin plays reveal in the text conditions that point to the possibility of a "vacant stage" at intervals in the production of a given play; taking some but not all of these possibly "vacant stages" to be indications of real and essential pauses in the action, modern critics posit a division of the Latin plays into chapters of action which in Roman comedy is supposed to be an obscured reproduction of more clearly marked act division in the Greek originals; this act division in the Greek originals is itself supposed to be the result of a development in which tragedy plays a dominant part. For later Greek comedy seems on occasion, if not always, to have separated chapters of action from one another by an inorganic intermezzo chorus, or interlude scenes, or flute music—all of which might easily be substitutes for a relatively organic inter-act chorus such as, in Greek tragedy, regularly divides, or connects, the six or seven smaller chapters of action which constitute the play. The "vacant stages," therefore, of the Latin plays become a final issue in the development from a choral drama in which the chorus is organic, through later Greek comedy in which inorganic features, largely musical and often choral, marked the end of acts, to a dramatic form in which "vacant stages" providing essential pauses in the

as it issues in Euanthius and Donatus, deserves more attention than it has received; the theory of structure in these Latin comments on Terence may be patchwork in its present form, but it has remote and honorable antecedents. On *katastrophe* and *eisbole* cf. Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 233, and nn. 1, 2; on *katastrophe* I might add the mime (vs. 16) edited by Koerte, *Archiv. für Papyrusforsch.*, VI (1913), 1 ff., with which cf. *katastole* in another mime (*Oxyrhynch. Pap.*, III, No. 413, vs. 95) and in the scholium on Aristoph. *Peace* 1204.

¹ If any complete analysis of the internal structure of the Latin plays had been made, I should naturally discuss it at this point. In default of such a study and for convenience in my own exposition I take up the theory of act division; for, though this problem is a matter of external and mechanical structure from one standpoint, Leo and other critics assert that the choral songs of tragedy set off logical units, and that the act division in Roman comedy often coincides with the logical chapters of the plot, as, e.g., Act I, Exposition; II-III, Complication; IV-V, Solution. This assertion, so far as Greek tragedy is concerned, is vigorously contested by Holzapfel, *Kennt die griech. Tragödie eine Akteinteilung?* (Giessen, 1914), who convinces himself that choral stasima are not at all regularly the boundaries of logical chapters, although tragedy does provide "bestimmte Richtlinien für das Entstehen von fünf Akten" (p. 96). I have accepted, however, Leo's assumptions in the argument above without raising the question whether or not the so-called acts in tragedy or comedy are logical units; it seems proper to meet Leo on his own ground.

action supplant the interludes that in the earlier forms kept the scenic background constantly occupied.¹

For brevity, I may state somewhat categorically the generally accepted facts, so far as I can discover them in the tangle of modern discussion: (1) Sophoclean and Euripidean tragedies fall into six or seven chapters of action set off by choral songs. (2) The *Ecclesiazusae* and *Plutus* of Aristophanes are susceptible of division into six or seven chapters; Aristophanes is supposed by some scholars to have written for these later plays choral interludes, many of which have not survived. (3) Hellenistic theory, perhaps derived from contemporary practice, divided tragedy into five acts; the practice is perhaps reflected in Senecan tragedy. (4) There is no evidence that Hellenistic comedy operated regularly with a theory of five acts, though the *Epitrepontes* of Menander seems, in its present fragmentary condition, to have indications of at least four acts set off by the label *chorou*, and the *komos*-chorus is here and elsewhere in New comedy a distinguishing mark of division into *mere*. (5) It is evident that Varro and others, probably under the influence of Hellenistic theory and method, attempted with difficulty to divide the plays of Terence into five acts, and sixteenth-century editors of Plautus somewhat violently followed a similar procedure in their texts of the poet. That either Plautus or Terence consciously organized his plays into any definite number of acts is made unlikely by the known facts of Varronian act division and by the present condition of the texts, but either or both may, distinctly or obscurely, reflect act division in their Greek originals. (6) In Leo's attempt to discriminate *mere* in the Roman plays, using "vacant stages" and other criteria, the number of such acts varies from a minimum of three to a maximum of seven: about one-third of the total number of plays have five acts, the four-act and six-act plays are almost as numerous as the five-act plays, and divisions into three and seven acts are represented each by several plays.²

¹ In Leo's view plots of intrigue force the organic chorus out of the comedy of manners (*Der Monolog*, 39, 41), and ultimately the inorganic chorus is replaced by flute music or by spoken interlude (*Pl. Forsch.*², 227, n. 3).

² For the facts in this paragraph and further details cf. Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 226 ff.; *Der Monolog*, 49 ff.; Legrand, *Daos*, 464 ff. On the fragment of the *Epitrepontes*, which adds a new *chorou* to the play, cf. *Oxyrhynch. Pap.*, X (1914), 88 ff. For a brief summary and critique cf. Conrad, *The Technique of Continuous Action in Roman Comedy* (1915), 1 ff., ably reviewed by Flickinger, *Class. Weekly*, X (1916-17), 147 ff.

This array of facts, it seems to me, is far from satisfactory as a support for the view that Hellenistic comedy owes its structural organization to tragedy. The relation between tragedy and the two later plays of Aristophanes may or may not be significant, but how or why in the Hellenistic period a five-act theory or practice developed in tragedy is unknown, and that a five-act division, or any other uniform act division, prevailed in Hellenistic comedy is not substantiated by the evidence. In tragedy the chorus is the germ of the dramatic form, and as such is an inalienable organic element, which, with an occasional exception such as Agathon's *embolima*, only slowly acquires a detachable inorganic character. In comedy the chorus, though relatively organic in the first part of an Aristophanic play, becomes generally inorganic in the second part, in which often topical songs set off episodic dialogue; and the somewhat dubious early history of the type provides for a chorus only as an alien element. In brief, for the broad characteristics of the Menandrian *komos* as an inorganic element (also, of course, as composed of drunken revelers primarily) every preparation is made in earlier comedy; tragedy, on the other hand, offers inherent obstacles to such a development. It is true, however, that early comedy, as we now know it, does not furnish a structure in which logically connected chapters of dialogue are consistently set off by choral songs; this structure, now vaguely indicated in the *Epitrepontes*, finds a better background in fifth-century tragedy than in any known form of earlier comedy. We might easily admit the influence of tragedy in this matter if we were not troubled by the thought that in non-scurrilous comedy of the fifth century the chorus, if it continued to be employed, might have affected the structure of the plays and established a form which we may describe as resembling the present text of the *Plutus*, but with choral interludes replacing the label *chorou* in the present text of that play. This form need not have been so directly due to the influence of tragedy, but may have arisen as a compromise between non-choral Sicilian comedy and choral scurrilous comedy. In any case it is well to remember that, however a chorus may find its way into the drama at the start, once there it is very quickly made to perform desirable economic functions; the economic necessity of working with a limited number of actors and the artistic regard for a plausible representation, however rough, of the lapse of time are neatly satisfied by the

choral interlude; and in a non-choral drama the same objects are obtained by interlude music, by stationary scenes, or by substantial pauses. One would suppose, however, if the chorus or any kind of interlude is so important for economic purposes, that such interludes would for a considerable period in the development of drama appear whenever the dramatist needed to cover time for off-stage action, or for change of rôles, or both, and that therefore the logical unity of a chapter of action between two interludes would not be a primary consideration. It is of course likely that a new phase of action will begin after an interlude, and in course of time a conscious regard for symmetry may lead to the demarcation of logical units by interludes; and ultimately such logical chapters may be fixed in number. There is no evidence that they did become so fixed in later Greek or Roman comedy, but only that a varying number of chapters is set off by various sorts of interludes.

In the Latin plays, if one is not blinded by the Euripidean theory, the visible facts are, first and primarily, that the structure in general points to a concern in the Roman theater for continuous action rather than for action interrupted by substantial pauses, least of all by any regularly recurring number of pauses in individual plays;¹ secondly, that there are in some plays conditions which, obscurely or distinctly, suggest a division into *mere* in the Greek originals.

May I illustrate from the *Persa* my own attitude toward "vacant stages" and consequent act division, so far as Roman productions are concerned? There are six possible vacant stages, at 52, 167, 250, 328, 399, and 752. At 53 ff. Saturio's monologue fills the interval of Toxilus' absence; in other words, it performs the same function as the vacant stage posited at 52, with the added and, of course, essential function of introducing us to the character of the parasite. At 168 ff. Sophoclidisca's patter-talk fills the interval of Toxilus' absence (167-83), again precisely what a substantial pause at 167 would have accomplished; why duplicate the devices for filling time intervals?² At 250 Sagaristio's monody similarly fills the interval

¹ For the details of an argument along these lines cf. Conrad, *op. cit.*

² An argument that, for example, more time is needed between 167 and 183 than is provided by the text of 167-82, and that therefore a substantial pause at 167 is required in addition to 167-82, is made difficult by the general consideration of time intervals in comedy such as Conrad sketches (*op. cit.*, 19-34).

between the departure and return of Paegnium and links two chapters of the action. At 752, just as 738-52 have made it possible for Toxilus departing at 737 to return at 753, so 753-76 are arranged to allow Dordalus, making his exit at 752, to return in 777; in brief, the action around the supposed vacant stage is obviously so interlocked as to serve the same economic purpose that a substantial pause in the action at 752 would adequately meet; accordingly the substantial pause becomes quite unlikely. With regard to 328 and 399 the case is different, and taken by themselves these places admit pauses so far as the text is concerned, but (1) if the other four supposed pauses are rightly eliminated it is not likely that these two places, only seventy lines apart, mark substantial breaks in otherwise continuous action; (2) a pause at 399 breaks the action at a point at which rapid action in the execution of the intrigue is highly desirable; (3) if my suggestions in *CP*, XI, 129, n. 2 have any validity, the distribution of rôles might point to 306-28 as devised, in part, to provide for Sophoclidisca's assuming the rôle of the parasite at 329, a condition which would make unlikely a pause at 328.¹

Now if we turn from the Latin play to the Greek original and ask ourselves whether any or all of the six possible pauses in the Latin text of the *Persa* were either real pauses or musical interludes of some sort in the Greek text, we face a very difficult question. We observe that the Latin text does not, implicitly or explicitly, suggest the existence in the Greek original of an inorganic chorus. And the same arguments against flute music would apply to the Greek original (if its text was essentially the same as the Latin text) as we have applied to four of the supposed vacant stages of the Latin copy. On the other hand, if the Greek text was essentially different from the Latin text, and if interludes other than monologue and monody took the place of the parasite's monologue, of Sophoclidisca's talk, Sagaristio's monody, etc., we have difficulty in imagining just how the Greek play could have been constructed, and we also have to admit an extraordinary, not to say incredible, originality on the part of

¹ That is, if there were a substantial pause at 328, this pause would supply the time needed for change of rôles, and the present condition of the text, as regards 306-28, would not be so easily explained. But of course I do not contend that the distribution of rôles in this play is so certain as to lend any great weight to this point.

Plautus.¹ I leave to partisans of act division the issue; for myself I seriously question whether the Greek original of the *Persa* in these large structural features was essentially different from the present Latin text.

Granting this, I observe with perfect equanimity that the *Heautontimorumenos*² contains evidence that an inorganic chorus operated in the Greek original; some of the vacant stages in the Latin text very distinctly point to interludes in the Greek performance such as we seem to have indicated in the *Epitrepontes*. And this diversity, represented in two plays, I feel perfectly free to extend indefinitely, not being hampered by any theory of exclusive or large dependence upon Greek tragedy, which inclines modern critics to put Hellenistic comedy in a strait-jacket of uniformity and regularity.³

VII

The discussion of vacant stages and of act division is much affected by the view that these and other aspects of Hellenistic and Roman comedy are the issues of a development from choral to non-choral drama. This development is suggested by many visible conditions in the texts of Old and New comedy and is explicitly stated in ancient theory, which describes Old comedy as choral and later comedy as at first removing the chorus but leaving a place for it, and then not even leaving a place for it. The last two periods of development in ancient theory are represented respectively by

¹ It may be observed that there are no monologues before 52, 167, and 250 (a very brief one before 137). This condition suggests that the solo speeches and songs at 52 ff., 167 ff., and 250 ff. are surrogates in a non-choral drama of a chorus in choral drama, in so far as they fill intervals of time primarily, though not exclusively, as does a chorus. Why may they not have performed this function in the Greek original?

² The conditions are particularly good at 409, where a night intervenes; at 748, where the *ancillae* may pass across the stage; and at 873, where the old men re-enter, having just left the stage at 872. At 229 I see no clear evidence of a break in the action; nor am I fully convinced by the arguments of Skutsch and Flickinger regarding the condition of the Greek original at 170.

³ The technique which I discern in the Greek original of the *Persa* is roughly analogous to admittedly Greek technique in other Roman plays in which interlude scenes, spoken or sung, are found, e.g., *Captivi* 460-98, 909-21, *Curc.* 462-86, *Most.* 313-47 (cf. Leo, *Der Monolog*, 59 and n. 2, *Pl. Forsch.*², 227, n. 3). Leo's contention that such spoken and sung interludes are substituted in the Greek originals for the chorus only relatively late and in the period of the *technitai*, I should meet with the question why they might not have appeared at any time in a non-choral drama.

Menander and by the Latin poets; and the Latin poets, by not even leaving a place for the chorus, made difficult a division into the five acts which in the Greek originals were clearly distinguished by choral passages or by the label *chorou*.¹ That Menandrian comedy often justified such a statement of the case I see no reason to question. But ancient theory, as I have elsewhere indicated (*CP*, XII, 409), seems to be operating with a selected mass of material; when it speaks of Old comedy it betrays no knowledge of Crates and Pherecrates; when it discusses New comedy it often, as above, concentrates upon Menander. We may concede, however, the truth and value of the broad generalization in ancient theory without closing our minds to other facts. A non-choral type of drama has problems in common with choral drama but must meet them without a chorus. Such problems, for example, are presented by a limited number of actors, by the necessity of covering plausibly time intervals, and by peculiarities of the stage setting. Time for off-stage action and for change of rôles is easily provided by a chorus, whether organic or inorganic; non-choral drama is driven to a variety of substitutes for the chorus—to lyrical intermezzos by single actors or small groups of actors, to instrumental music, to dances, to monologues, or to dialogue scenes that may not always promote the action. It requires not a little skill to bridge gaps with scenes, whether spoken or sung, which are inseparable organic units and are not too manifestly mere bridges. With these considerations in mind we may better appreciate the most striking feature of the technique of New comedy.

The difference between my own views and the tendencies of modern criticism may be illustrated by a brief criticism of Leo's theory of the monologue.² To understand his argument we must outline the results of his study, which, by its scope, by the thorough marshaling of material, by the nice discrimination of stylistic qualities, and by the historical perspective of the investigator, excites the greatest admiration and doubtless carries conviction. Racial psychology prepares us for an extensive use of solo speeches in Greek literature. This tendency of the race is definitely limited in fifth-century

¹ Euanthius *De fabula* iii. 1 (Wessner, I, 18); for further details cf. Conrad, *op. cit.*, 8 ff., and footnotes.

² For brevity, following Leo, I use "monologue" to cover solo speech and solo song; nor do I always differentiate soliloquy in the narrow sense.

drama by the presence of a chorus. Only before the entrance of the chorus is genuine solo speech available. To this limitation set by a chorus Aeschylus and Sophocles in the main submit. Euripides, however, strains against the barrier of the chorus. His interest in solo speech led to a steady development toward a detachable prologue in the only part of the play in which he was free from the handicap of a chorus. Within the play, between the entrance and the exit songs of the chorus, a similar progress appears toward the increasing use of quasi-monologues—the prayer monologue, the address to the elements and inanimate surroundings that gradually reverts to actors or chorus, and pathetic speech that disregards the presence of chorus and actors; rarely too he removes the barrier to solo speech and, withdrawing the chorus, as, for example, in the *Helena*, finds expression in more nearly genuine solo speech. The quasi-monologues in the presence of the chorus Leo finds most frequently just after a choral song and at the beginning of a *meros*; in a relatively few cases they appear just before a choral song and at the end of a *meros*. The goal toward which Euripides was tending, hampered by the chorus, is clearly indicated in the *Helena*, a play which in so many other features of form and content anticipates later comedy. In this play Euripides reveals what he would have done without a chorus; here the *mere*, or acts, of the drama are bracketed between monologues with remarkable regularity. The immediate issues of this technique Leo sees in Roman comedy. The Euripidean prologue is firmly established in many plays of Plautus. The monologue, now that there is no chorus, is freely extended within the plays of Plautus and Terence, and it brackets with some regularity in many plays those units of action which Leo discriminates as *mere*.¹

My objection to Leo's inferences from the facts is that a significance is attached to many phenomena which they will not bear. So far as the position of the monologue is concerned, it is clear that (apart from "asides," with which Leo is not primarily occupied) the monologue as a solo speech must appear at the beginning or at the end of units of the action; at these points, only, the stage is cleared of other characters, and solo speech is possible; under any other conditions a solo speech must be delivered over the heads of other actors

¹ For a brief résumé of his argument cf. *Der Monolog*, 53.

or the chorus. In Euripidean tragedy the chorus is usually present, and the dramatist can best introduce his surrogates of the monologue only when the scene of action is relatively clear, that is, just before or after a choral song.¹ In non-choral drama a vast majority of monologues must appear just before the arrival or after the departure of other characters. In brief, in each type of drama the position of the monologues or quasi-monologues is largely inevitable, and it is accordingly unsafe to infer from the position of solo speeches that one type of drama has influenced the other type. The most that may be said is that Euripidean tragedy (or later Euripidean tragedy) and New comedy (at least Philemon and possibly Diphilus, according to Leo) prefer to begin new phases of the action with solo speech rather than with dialogue and much less regularly to end such chapters of the action similarly.

Now this fact, just stated, may be significant and may repay careful study, but so far as Leo's main thesis is concerned, viz., that the quasi-monologues in Euripides, limited in quantity and variety, are opening the way toward the vast number of monologues in comedy, most of which are entirely different in content from their supposed Euripidean forbears, and further, that a bracketing of acts in New comedy results from Euripidean practice in this regard, we must observe, not only that the position of the monologue is an unsafe criterion and that the qualitative and quantitative differences between the two types are remarkable, but that the regularity of act structure posited by Leo for New comedy is not established by the evidence.

Leo's statements of fact are full and frank, but naturally he does not throw into bold relief the obstacles to his theory. With some measure of success he finds in the Latin plays (only three) adapted from originals by Philemon the bracketing of *mere* by monologues.² Of Menander's technique he can get no clear idea because, as he asserts, so many of Menander's originals are contaminated in the Roman copies³; and in trying to account for contradictory conditions within the group of contaminated plays Leo displays an almost

¹ These somewhat obvious facts are sensibly stated by Legrand, *Daos*, 490.

² *Der Monolog*, 49-53.

³ *Ibid.*, 55 ff.

acrobatic versatility.¹ Nor is Diphilus' practice easily determined from the two Latin plays, one of which is contaminated, that come from his hand. Of ten plays not traceable to any of these three playwrights Leo finds his norm of act structure fairly well established in all but three, the *Epidicus*, the *Curculio*, and the *Asinaria*.² Even this statement of Leo's makes a rather weak case for any dominant Euripidean influence. Without stressing statistics³ one may fairly describe the situation in the following terms: Not a single Latin play has all its acts bracketed by monologues; ten plays, only two of which are contaminated, have absolutely no acts bracketed by monologues; eight plays alone contribute the slightest support to Leo's theory, so far as they have a reasonable percentage of acts bracketed by monologues (and to be quite fair I have called a little less or more than half a reasonable percentage); the other eight plays lie between the two extremes. If Leo contends that it is not fair to rest his case on bracketing, but that we should consider, apart from the bracketing, the proportion of acts that either begin or end with monologues, the figures are these: There are 130 opportunities to begin acts with monologues, of which the Latin plays accept 78; there are 104⁴ opportunities to end acts with monologues, of which 31 are accepted. In other words, more than half the acts begin with monologues, and less than a third end with monologues. Or finally, not to neglect any angle, two-thirds of all the entrance monologues of Roman

¹ Thus, for example, the *Casina*, from the Greek of Diphilus, does not accord with Leo's expectation of acts bracketed by monologues; the *Rudens*, from the same Greek author, does accord; Leo (*ibid.*, 54) is confirmed in his view that the *Casina* is contaminated, and he sees in that play Plautine technique. The *Andria*, though rich in monologues, has no bracketing of acts; Leo (*ibid.*, 57) remarks that Menander's composition has disappeared in the process of contamination, and that Terence's technique is that of the *Casina*. The *Stichus*, *Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, and *Miles gloriosus*, on the other hand, are fairly regular in the bracketing of acts; Leo concludes (*ibid.*, 56, 60-61) that Plautus has observed and followed the technique of his Greek originals! Obviously, if one accepts Leo's theory of contamination and of the monologue, these are the only possible conclusions, but does such versatility in meeting contradictory conditions in supposedly contaminated plays stimulate confidence in theories either of contamination or of the monologue?

² *Ibid.*, 59 ff.

³ The figures that follow are based on Leo's own interpretations, though he furnishes no statistics.

⁴ The difference between 130 and 104 is due to the fact that, conventionally, the last act of a Roman play usually ends with dialogue in trochaic septenarii, so that a monologue at the end of the play and of the last act is practically impossible.

comedy (not including the *Zutrittsmonolog*) stand at the beginning of acts; slightly more than two-thirds of the exit monologues stand at the end of acts. In my opinion there are hardly more than two significant facts in the situation: first, as we should expect, monologues stand at the beginning or end of smaller or larger units of action, and in so doing must appear often at the beginning or end of Leo's acts; secondly, there is a notable predominance of entrance monologues, indicating a distinct preference for solo speech or song over dialogue in the technique of entrance; if one includes the *Zutrittsmonolog* and *Eintrittsmonolog* under the general term of entrance monologue, 60 per cent of the monologues of Roman comedy are entrance speeches, 20 per cent are exit monologues, and 20 per cent are link monologues.

It is, however, more illuminating to observe the variations in practice in individual plays. For here we see, what I am most eager to establish in opposition to current opinion, the absolute negation of any uniform procedure, and the consequent weakness of a view that Euripidean tragedy exerted a determining influence upon the form of comedy. Leo himself, on coming to the two Latin plays from the hand of Apollodorus, the *Phormio* and *Hecyra*, immediately recognizes a novel and individual technique; the *Phormio*, for example, has twelve monologues and five acts; but only one of the dozen solo speeches stands at the beginning or end of an act, and two-thirds of them are link monologues. The *Captivi*, he has to admit, only seemingly supports his theory; for two of its monologues are interlude scenes, and as such reveal another novel type of structure only partially paralleled by the *choragus* scene of the *Curculio*; that is, here clearly the monologue does not follow a vacant stage but occupies a stage which would otherwise be vacant; in other words, it performs one of the main functions of a chorus. Beyond these clear marks of variety and individuality lie equally clear evidences of divergence from any norm in other plays. What could be more suggestive than the contrast between the *Aulularia* and the *Asinaria*? The former is supposed by Leo to be Menandrian and is innocent of contamination; it has twenty-two monologues, an unusually large number, and four acts; yet of this large number of solo speeches only one stands at the beginning of an act, three at the ends of acts, and

no act is bracketed; and all this in spite of the fact that there are nine entrance and seven exit speeches out of the twenty-two. On the other hand, observe the *Asinaria*, from the Greek of an obscure poet, Demophilus; it has only six monologues, the smallest number of all the plays, and all six are used in the first half of the play, one at the beginning, two at the ends of acts. Possibly the plots of these two plays are peculiar and the structure correspondingly peculiar; but are we likely to appreciate properly the various theories of act division, of monologue, of Euripidean influence, until we consider how the plot and various other factors affect structure? Between the two extremes presented by these two plays the other comedies offer other interesting vagaries, into which I need not go at present.

In this discussion of the monologue I have necessarily accepted, for descriptive and argumentative purposes, the theory of vacant stages and of act division, although in the previous sections of the paper I have attacked the validity of the act theory, and of the vacant stage in Roman comedy as a criterion of division into acts. Perhaps I should state now my general attitude toward Leo's theories of the vacant stage, monologue, and act division. The broad implication in his discussion seems to me to be that a rather regular sequence of exit monologue, choral song, entrance monologue in choral drama (and specially in Euripides) results in Roman comedy in a fairly uniform sequence of exit monologue, vacant stage, entrance monologue.¹ Now I am perfectly willing to admit that the rôle of the Menandrian *komos*-chorus makes it likely that a Roman poet, finding such a chorus in his Greek original, would substitute for it a vacant stage, and monologues might often appear on either side of the *komos*-chorus and of the subsequent vacant stage. What I doubt is whether this Menandrian technique was consistently employed by Menander or by other Hellenistic poets, and whether Euripidean influence is a factor to be reckoned with when such technique appears.

¹ This statement is not quite fair to Leo. Exit monologues in Euripides are relatively few in number, and Leo would probably stress the fact that the sequence of choral song and entrance monologue in choral drama is replaced by the sequence of vacant stage and entrance monologue in Roman comedy. It is true that entrance monologue in Roman comedy is predominant, but from my standpoint the vacant stage before it is mere assumption in most cases. The sequence of exit monologue, vacant stage, and entrance monologue in Roman comedy occurs about 35 times out of a possible 104; eight plays have no examples of this sequence.

In my own mind I leave room for a further possibility that, much oftener than Leo admits (in the *Captivi* and *Curculio*), a monologue is itself a substitute for the chorus of choral drama, that it bridges gaps rather than follows a gap, that it promotes continuity of action even in the Greek original, as it does in my view, for example, in the *Persa* as a Roman production.¹ From this standpoint possible vacant stages in Roman comedy are not very regularly substantial pauses, and monologues are sometimes surrogates of the vacant stage as well as of the chorus. So far as Euripidean influence is concerned I see nothing in the evidence that conflicts with the view that, given racial psychology which prompts soliloquy, and granting the dramatic convenience of the monologue as an artifice in facilitating structure,² the monologue is bound to assert itself in comedy, without any Euripidean influence, as soon as the chorus is removed; this begins to appear at once in the *Ecclesiazusae* and *Plutus*, and if the *Helena* also illustrates it I see only the parallel development which I should expect in the two dramatic types.³

Euripidean influence is certainly not manifest in the spirit and general content of the comic monologue, and if its formal features are due to the tragic poet the mold has been usually filled with a content that comes either from the resources of Old comedy or from the immediate dramatic necessities of the New comedy of intrigue. The Euripidean monologue is limited in the main to prayers and

¹ Leo limits the technique to the passages referred to above, p. 116, n. 3. Other passages which are *chorartig* (*Der Monolog*, 68, *Pl. Forsch.*² 240, n. 1) in his opinion are of a different sort, being mainly *Lauserscenen*.

² Cf. Arnold, *The Soliloquies of Shakespeare* (New York, 1911), 81, who indulges in the paradox that the structural monologues opening, closing, and linking chapters of action are artificial speeches used to avoid the appearance of artifice. Similarly Roessler, *The Soliloquy in German Drama* (New York, 1915), 17, regards the structural monologue as a lubricant in the wheelwork of the drama.

³ The point will be raised that Aeschylus and Sophocles do not use the Euripidean surrogates of the monologue. In this, as in many other respects, Euripides and comedy are more or less alike, while the older tragedians differ. Modern critics hastily use this situation to establish the influence of Euripides upon comedy. But who knows, if there is any influence exerted at all, whether or not comedy as early as Epicharmus or as late as Aristophanes influenced Euripides? Euripides and Old comedy have much in common: informality, direct appeal to the people, colloquial style, indifference to sophisticated art; Aristophanes criticizes Euripides because these and other features are out of place in tragedy; it would only be a pleasant irony if the tragic poet, from unconscious sympathy or conscious imitation, often approximated the style of comedy.

addresses to inanimate surroundings and to occasional pathetic speeches over the heads of actors and chorus. Of the huge number of comic monologues no general description is possible, but the commonest types are narrative monologues outlining past, present, and future action, and solo speeches on general aspects of social life.¹ The former result largely from the dramatist's obligation to cover offstage action or to make his plot intelligible; the latter, though occasionally touching Euripidean themes,² are quite as much in the spirit of the Aristophanic parabasis. Both types, and monologues in general in comedy, are very often explicit or implicit addresses to the audience³ and as such reflect the informality of Old comedy; the speeches to the chorus and to the audience in Aristophanes supply all the needed literary background for the manner of delivery and for some of the material of the comic monologue of the next centuries.⁴

VIII

In one type of expository monologue, however, modern critics seem to have unassailable evidence of the closest interrelation between Hellenistic comedy and Euripides. The Plautine prologue that narrates the plot in a detachable speech to the audience delivered by a divinity, or a character in the play, or a "prologus," is generally admitted to reproduce all the essential features of the Euripidean prologue. This evidence I have no desire to minimize, but I may properly indicate by a few brief comments that the antecedents of the Plautine prologue are mixed rather than simple, as is so often the case with phenomena in which modern criticism stresses heavily the Euripidean features.

The prologue is only one form of exposition, or only part of the exposition. At the outset I find it significant that another type of exposition, in which a dialogue between master and slave opens the play, and the master in response to urgent questions discloses facts of interest to the audience, is admitted by the chief essayist on the

¹ For examples, cf. Leo, *Der Monolog*, 72, nn. 13 and 14.

² Cf., e.g., Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*², 119; for the philosophizing as such cf. *CP*, XIII (1918), 134-37.

³ Leo, *Der Monolog*, 80; Schaffner, *De aversum loquendi ratione* (Giessen, 1911), 18.

⁴ Leo, *Der Monolog*, 79 ff., *Geschichte d. röm. Lit.*, I, 107, 109, n. 1.

prologues of Greek comedy not only to have distinctly mixed antecedents but to owe its origin to comedy rather than to tragedy;¹ and this too in spite of the closest resemblance in details of phraseology as well as of general situation between such dialogue expositions in the Roman plays and the corresponding expositions of Euripidean tragedy: “. . . videntur mihi talia initia ut Thesmophoriazuserum Pluti Iphigeniae Aul. Pseudoli Curculionis primum ficta esse a poetis comicis, inde autem manasse et per tragoediam et per mediam novamque comoediam.”² Without intending at all to subscribe to any theory of origins in this matter,³ I quote this statement of Frantz simply to suggest that in the triangular relation which is often apparent between Aristophanes, Euripides, and New comedy one must be open-minded to the possibility that early comedy rather than Euripides is the initiating force, and that Euripidean influence is only one of many strands in the complicated phenomenon of later comedy.

It is this same triangular relation that confronts a student of the prologue as a detachable speech to the audience, if he is not biased by preconceptions of Euripides' influence upon later comedy. A discriminating critic like Leo⁴ may successfully trace in the Euripidean prologues a development from a speech in which the expositor carefully accounts in the prologue for his appearance, justifies the soliloquy form of his address, and in general satisfies all the demands of a modern sophisticated critic, to a negligent and relatively inartistic prologue in which the speaker seems to be almost impersonal, disregards motivation, external or internal, and is conscious of the audience, though he does not directly appeal to it.⁵ And the

¹ Frantz, *De comoediæ Att. prologis* (1891), 21 ff. He is quite convinced, however, that the prologue as a detachable expository speech is thoroughly Euripidean (*ibid.*, 30 ff., 40, 45, 49).

² *Ibid.*, 28.

³ In this small matter I should probably not espouse any theory of origins or influence but content myself with the observation that comic and tragic dramatists, facing similar problems of exposition, solve the difficulties in similar simple ways. The modern playwright who opens his play with a dialogue between the butler and the maid need not have read ancient drama or contemporary drama; such devices are quickly conventionalized, of course, and become traditional, but they are weak props for any thoroughgoing theory of origins or influence.

⁴ *Der Monolog*, 14-26.

⁵ Explicit address to the audience in tragedy is so rare that Frantz (*op. cit.*, 50) properly describes it as a descent to the plane of comedy.

conclusion is that in this final type of Euripidean prologue "der 'prologus' der späteren Komödie ist . . . potentiell vorhanden."¹ Over against this fact must be balanced the equally significant conditions in Aristophanes' *Knights* and *Wasps* and *Peace* (cf. *Birds*, 30 ff.), which critics cannot refer to Euripidean tragedy at all; in these plays one of two slaves, after some preliminary dialogue, turns to the audience and in frankly informal address to the spectators expounds the theme or general situation.² Here is a much clearer background for the inartistic comic prologue of later times; nor can one deny that the interruption, in the Plautine prologues, of the exposition of the plot by facetious remarks and serious reflections (as, for example, in the *Captivi*) for the benefit of the audience is quite alien to Euripides and entirely in accord with the spirit of Old comedy. It is, however, quite clear that the monologue form of detachable exposition in New comedy is more closely allied to Euripidean technique than, for example, to the monologue of Dicaeopolis at the beginning of the *Acharnians*; and one may easily see how the travesty of tragedies would have brought over the Euripidean monologue into Middle comedy, and how readily the same expository form would have been retained in the comedy of manners. At the same time one must admit that the extreme informality, the frankness of direct address to the spectators, the conscious exposition of the plot, are all forestalled in Aristophanic comedy. In such matters Euripides may be not an initiating force but a complacent victim to the democratic informality of early comedy.

Not only as relatively inorganic solo speech is the prologue in Hellenistic and Roman comedy traced to Euripides, but in the choice of persons as speakers comedy is supposed to be following closely the tragic poet. For in Euripides the prologues are delivered by char-

¹ *Der Monolog*, 25.

² Leo, of course, recognizes the contribution of Old comedy in this respect (*Der Monolog*, 80), but his general appraisal puts all the emphasis upon the Euripidean prologue. Beyer, *De scaenis . . . quibus . . . narrantur, non aguntur* (Göttingen, 1912), 49, asserting that this Aristophanic form of exposition is primitive and was established in comedy much earlier, strangely argues that it is derived from tragedy. It may be observed that, so far as this expository address to the audience in Aristophanes follows preliminary dialogue, it furnishes a better background for the intercalated prologue of Plautine comedy than, I think, anything that Euripides has to offer.

acters in the play or by divinities; and the extant prologues of comedy are put in the mouths of the same two types of speakers; comedy, to be sure, has added to the list the impersonal "prologus," whom modern critics dismiss as a natural final development of the inorganic prologue.¹ In this bit of cumulative evidence, however, there is a deviation from complete correspondence that might prove significant of a different history for the expository prologue. The divinities who deliver the Euripidean prologues are, almost without exception, the major gods and goddesses of the hierarchy.² The divine beings who serve as prologists in comedy are of a different and lower order. It is at least incautious to speak of "die direkte Abkunft"³ (from the prologizing divinities in tragedy) of such allegorical figures as Aer, Elenchos, Agnoia, Auxilium, Luxuria, Inopia, Tuche, and Phobos, and of minor deities like Arcturus, Heros, and Lar Familiaris. The consistency of allegorical prologists in comedy is striking. One may argue, of course, that the less heroic material of New comedy naturally make unavailable as prologists such divinities as Aphrodite, Artemis, Apollo, and the like, and that allegorical figures are a natural substitute for the Euripidean prologists. On the other hand, there seems to be no special reason why Venus should not utter the prologue of many a comedy in which the love story is prominent, or why Neptune as well as Arcturus might not introduce the *Rudens*, if with consequent loss of the charming detail in the present prologue; but this does not happen, so far as we can discover from extant material.⁴ That Kalligeneia, who seems to have spoken an expository monologue at the beginning of Aristophanes' second *Thesmophoriazusae*, or Dorpia, who perhaps similarly introduced Philyllius' *Herakles*, is a perfect background for the allegorical prologists of later comedy is not quite certain; these deities were probably personifications of festival days, and as such approximate the divine prologists of New comedy; they may, however, have had active rôles in the plays, and the *Herakles* may

¹ Leo, *Pl. Forsch.*,² 224 ff.

² The case of Thanatos in the *Alceste* is hardly a real exception.

³ Leo, *op. cit.*, 212.

⁴ Dionysus in the Strassburg prologue is far from certain, nor are Eros and Aphrodite in the Ghorân papyri valid exceptions. For other possible cases of comic prologists cf. Leo, *op. cit.*, 212, n. 4.

have been a mythological travesty. But even if Old comedy had no prologists of precisely the same type as New comedy, it should be clear that the allegorical figures of Ploutos, Opora, Theoria, Eirene, the Logos Dikaïos and Logos Adikos, which issue naturally from the fantastic plots of Aristophanic comedy, suggest that the allegorical prologists of New comedy, as allegorical figures, are not primarily Euripidean at all;¹ nor should anybody overlook in this connection the rôles of Earth and Sea, of Logos and Logina, in Epicharmus. The part that Sicilian-Attic comedy and very early mythological travesty of epic story and oral legend played in this development both of allegorical figures and of the prologue is unknown, but conservative criticism will reckon with the unknown, at least so far as to modify hasty conclusions from the known.²

IX

It would strengthen the contention of modern critics appreciably if, through careful analysis of the structure of action in New comedy and of the mainsprings of action, they had established close connections with Euripidean tragedy. Legrand in his *Daos* (p. 383), having asserted that the rigorous unity of later comedy is due to the influence of tragedy, remarks that he will, in the course of subsequent chapters, repeatedly note that the comedies employed the same motives or adopted the same general arrangement as did the dramas of Euripides; yet in his immediately following discussion of simple and intricate plots and of "les ressorts de l'action" there is not a single reference to any Euripidean parallels. In various particularities of dramatic technique, however, Legrand and others do find further evidence of Euripidean influence. Some representative instances of such discussions I must briefly consider.

¹ The nearest approach to such figures in Euripides is in the prelude to the second part of the *Hercules furens*, in which *Lussa*, conducted by Iris, enters the palace somewhat as Inopia is escorted by Luxuria to the house of the hero in the prologue of the *Trinummus*. I should be quite willing to grant that Philemon might have been influenced by Euripides here, without admitting that the isolated instance in Euripides is sufficient to explain the extensive use of allegorical prologists in comedy.

² It is pertinent to remark that the call for applause at the end of the play has a background in Aristophanes; cf. Leo, *op. cit.*, 240 and n. 3. And it is not uninteresting to observe that Leo is mistaken (*ibid.*, 241) in thinking that the quotation of a similar tag in Suetonius (*Aug.* 99) is from Middle or New comedy; is it not clearly implied to come from a mime?

A characteristic of most of these studies in the minutiae of dramatic technique is the acceptance, at the start, of the Euripidean theory; the writers then proceed to find cumulative evidence of the dependence of comedy upon tragedy in whatever detail of craftsmanship they choose for investigation. Thus, for example, Fraenkel opens a chapter of his study with the statement: "id effectum est ut hodie paene iam pueris decantatum sit ex quinti saeculi tragoedia, Euripidea imprimis, in mediam novamque comoediam non modo varia fabularum argumenta . . . sed etiam singulas sententias . . . defluxisse";¹ and Harms begins his essay on motivation: "constat novam . . . comoediam potius tragoediae Euripideae quam veteris comoediae formam atque rationem secutam esse."² Considering the vogue of the theory that Euripides is "der wahre Begründer der neueren attischen Komödie," one can hardly blame such writers, but the danger in starting from this theory as a demonstrated fact is obvious. Nor are the methods employed in the course of investigation as sound as they should be. Constantly one finds the writers of dissertations observing that A resembles B, and that therefore B is derived from A; that both A and B may be derived from X, or that for other reasons the resemblance of A to B does not establish any causal connection between the two, never enters into their calculations. In general, having recognized the possibility of Euripidean influence, they never stop to eliminate all other possibilities. Practically such investigations are brought to a conclusion at the point where fruitful study might well begin.

I can easily sympathize, for example, with anybody who, in reading the *Alcestis* of Euripides, remarks³ that "der gastfreundliche Herr, die aufopferungswillige Gattin, der treue, etwas beschränkte Diener, der böse, senile Alte" can easily be paralleled from Menander and Plautus. But if this stereotyping tendency in Euripides is a natural issue from the technique of the *Märchen*, and if in

¹ Fraenkel, *De media et nova comoedia qu. sel.* (Göttingen, 1912), 53.

² Harms, *De introitu personarum in Euripidis et novae comoediae fab.* (Göttingen, 1914), 1.

³ Howald, *Untersuch. zur Technik der euripid. Trag.* (Tübingen, 1914), 19. Howald does not use the resemblance to prove any interrelation, and I quote his words only to illustrate a natural and current impression of the likeness between Euripides and comedy in the matter of characters.

Aristophanes I find Socrates approximating a typical philosopher rather than the real Socrates, and if Aristophanes and Doric farce already have developed, without Euripidean influence, stereotyped professional rôles, I must conclude that the degree of Euripidean influence upon New comedy in this respect is difficult to determine; certainly I cannot lay much weight on the fact that Aristophanes does not stereotype domestic rôles as long as he has little occasion to use them. And I must remain open-minded to the possibility that the resemblance of Euripides to New comedy does not establish any interdependence of the one and the other. For aught I know Sicilian-Attic comedy may have had stereotyped domestic rôles before Euripides wrote tragedy. I am not denying that some comic poets learned something about character treatment from Euripides, directly or indirectly, but again the whole problem is a complex, not a simple, one.

The so-called unities of time and place in drama have been studied, and various observations have been made regarding the devices used by dramatists to preserve these unities. The recent history of such studies is significant. Felsch¹ records the artifices used by Greek tragedians. Polczyk² follows with a study of the same problems in New comedy and notes in connection with almost every artifice that Felsch has found the same device in Greek tragedy; Polczyk then concludes that in these respects New comedy is dependent upon tragedy. Almost immediately, however, Todd, in studying the unity of time in Aristophanes, avows that Old comedy uses the same devices as New comedy, a fact which Polczyk had denied.³ If Todd is right we are confronted with a dilemma: Did Euripides teach Aristophanes these artifices? Or did Aristophanes, Euripides, and poets of the New comedy, facing the same problem, solve it in the same way independently of one another?

That the second of these two alternatives must be chosen seems to me likely when we are concerned with particularities of technique that are clearly due to conditions of the Greek theater, in which Euripides and poets of the Old and the New comedy produced their

¹ *Bresl. Philol. Abhandl.*, IX (1907), Heft 4.

² Polczyk, *De unitatibus et loci et temporis in nov. com. obs.* (Breslau, 1909).

³ Todd, *Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.*, XXIV (1915), 50 ff.

plays. A rigid scenic background and an essentially outdoor setting were conditions that faced Euripides and the comic poets; resemblances between tragedy and comedy, therefore, in artifices which manifestly result from a common interest in overcoming these and similar difficulties cannot be used to establish the dependence of comedy upon tragedy, especially when the devices are of a simple and obvious nature. So in the mass of conventions relating to the *mise en scène* which Legrand accumulates on pages 428-63 of his *Daos*, nobody should look for any evidence of the interrelation of the two literary types; nor does Legrand venture beyond the wise statement (p. 461) that the germs of these conventions are found both in Aristophanes and in Euripides. Other critics rashly jump to conclusions; even if Polczyk is right in denying that Aristophanes preserves unity of place by the same devices as Euripides and New comedy, it is hazardous for him to argue from the resemblance in this respect between the tragic poet and later comic poets that New comedy took over these conventions from tragedy.

It is of course natural, when Aristophanes differs in his procedure, and Euripides and New comedy agree, to infer a close historical relation between tragedy and New comedy. Even this inference is unsafe if, as is the case, tragedy and later comedy have in common but quite independently of each other domestic plots and broadly emotional incidents which Aristophanes does not employ. Thus, for example, Harms¹ in his study of motivation observes that the entrance of characters upon the stage in Euripides and in New comedy is often motivated "*aut dolore aut inquiete animi aut consideratione*," whereas in Aristophanes such emotional and mental conditions are not generally employed to make the entrance of characters natural and inevitable; for this and other reasons Harms concludes that New comedy takes over from Euripides its devices for motivating entrance. But when such resemblances are pointed out one should first consider whether the common element may not be accounted for without any dependence of one type upon the other. Aristophanic comedy, in the nature of the case, does not stress the emotional side of life; Euripides and New comedy, on the contrary, are dealing with the emotional experiences of everyday people and

¹ *Op. cit.*, 64.

will naturally motivate action by elementary emotions to a very large degree without necessarily being interdependent in that respect.

Harms, and others in similar studies, apparently strengthen their arguments by pointing out corroborating resemblances in details of phraseology and style. This procedure is in itself quite legitimate, but again the critics are hasty in their inferences. In the first place, some stylistic features which Euripides cultivates became common property of writers in the Hellenistic period and may appear in New comedy without any direct influence of the tragic poet. Again many details of form and turns of phrase may recur in both types of literature, because they are taken by each type, independently of the other, from the common fund of colloquial expression which Euripides, somewhat abnormally, and comedy, quite naturally, delight to use, or from some other common source. When Harms,¹ for example, discovers that the Phrygian in *Orestes* 1375 justifies his entrance by revealing fear in the words, "Woe's me; whither shall I flee?" and that Bromia in the *Amphitruo* similarly exclaims, "me miseram, quid agam nescio?" and Myrrhina in the *Hecyra*, "perii, quid agam? quo me vortam?" the resemblance in these emotional commonplaces between Euripides and New comedy moves me about as much as would the discovery that Harms and I had made the same blunder; without imitating him I am quite capable of it. Each of these details is trivial in itself, but the discussion of them so pervades the treatment of comedy in these days that I may be allowed another concrete example. Fraenkel² discovers the following feature in both Euripidean tragedy and later comedy: Two interlocutors in a dialogue scene are engaged in expounding a situation or facts; one of them, A, is telling the story, but instead of setting it forth in an unbroken sequence he interrupts himself and turns to the other interlocutor, B, and says, "Do you know so-and-so?" B answers, "Of course I do," and there follows a brief conversation on this line, after which A resumes his narrative. Now this simple bit of dialogue technique Fraenkel offers as proof of the dependence of comedy upon Euripides, although he says incidentally, "sane e cottidiani sermonis consuetudine mutuatus." Naturally I wonder how he knows that

¹ *Op. cit.*, 29 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, 54 ff.

Euripides and any comic poet did not independently draw upon the material of ordinary speech for this device; and I wonder too just how any dramatic poet who prefers dialogue to monologue can manage a bit of expository narrative without some such commonplace device by which the other person in the scene may be drawn into the conversation.

Briefly then, in these particularities of technique modern criticism stops short at the simple equation of resemblance with dependence. But to establish dependence something more must be discovered than simple devices to meet conditions, external or internal, that are common to both types of drama and result either from production in the same sort of theater with similar peculiarities of scene setting, or from the use of similar pathetic material.

X

The force of these modern tendencies has led us to view Roman comedy as a *Kunst*, either quite disregarding farcical and burlesque elements and inorganic structure, or dismissing them as Roman intrusions in the artistic fabric woven under Euripidean influence. We need feel under no obligation to demolish this theory of Euripidean influence; least of all need we set up an opposing theory. But, as often in the study of literary genesis, a confession of ignorance is a wholesome preliminary to the discovery of sound methods and of helpful results. Surely we must admit that the direct and indirect literary antecedents of Hellenistic comedy include a number of totally unknown factors. There is the transitional period of Middle comedy, represented only by fragments; there is Sicilian-Attic comedy, of whose form and content we are quite ignorant; there are, possibly, subsidiary factors, like the mime and fictitious narrative in prose, which are chiefly known to us now only as they were developed in centuries later even than the period of New comedy. Such conditions should promote a conservative attitude toward any theorizing. It is very tempting to seize upon the known extant material of Euripides and Plautus and Terence and to construct a theory of dependence that disregards the unknown.

Some degree of substantial dependence upon Euripides in particular and tragedy in general is made probable by the cultivation of

mythological travesty in the Middle period. The general probability, however, and the degree of dependence are very difficult to determine, in view of the loss of comedies from the transitional period, and must be qualified by two known facts: (1) that such mythological travesty is much earlier than the Middle period and dates back even to a time when epic and oral tradition of myth may have been the subjects of travesty; and (2) that Aristotle seems to have found in Sicilian-Attic comedy rather than in Aristophanes or Euripides the antecedents of the comedy of his own day. In addition to the indirect influence of tragedy through mythological travesty there is a more palpable and immediate impact of tragedy upon a few individual poets, notably Menander and Philemon; yet the general character and degree of such influence hardly warrants a careful critic in demanding even of Menander and Philemon a regular conformity to supposed canons of Euripidean art. And at least the current assumption that Hellenistic comedy as a whole was monotonously regular and uniformly artistic deserves a thorough overhauling.

Mere comparison of Euripides and New comedy may lead to deceptive results. Currents of thought that are abnormal in the time of Euripides become commonplace in the next century; democratic informality that sets Euripides apart from Aeschylus and Sophocles is an inherent quality of all comedy in Greece; prosaic and colloquial idioms that are idiosyncrasies in the tragic poet are the natural stock in trade of comedy; the material of later comedy is pathetic, as, independently, are the incidents of tragedy; and, finally, tragedy and comedy were produced under roughly the same external conditions. Naturally, therefore, there will be resemblances, but only after careful study may we accept them as evidence of any direct influence of tragedy upon comedy. Like many other types of literature in the Hellenistic period, comedy marks the confluence of many different streams, the crisscrossing of various earlier types, the constant fusion of contemporary realistic experience with themes and incidents conventionalized by a conservative literary tradition.

A frank recognition of the complicated phenomenon would save us from the dangerous use of simple universal solvents. Our present practice, based on the Euripidean theory, is treacherously easy. We measure all the plays of Plautus and Terence by the standard of

Menander's *Epitrepontes*¹ and assume a uniform procedure in all the Greek authors of the originals which Plautus and Terence adapted, blinding ourselves to the manifest variety in the twenty-six Latin plays. With supposed canons of Euripidean art as a basis we note the inartistic and attribute it to Roman handling, disregarding both the fact that the whole history of Greek comedy naturalizes inartistic irregularities and the likelihood that the tradition of the Latin texts through the hands of stage managers offered every opportunity for excision, substitution, and displacement.

What little we know and the large amount of what we do not know should lead us to approach the higher criticism of Roman comedy with caution and in a somewhat pessimistic temper. But there is one condition that prompts a mildly optimistic outlook. Twenty-six plays constitute a considerable mass of material. Should it not be possible, disregarding all theories, to analyze these plays, placing side by side like features, discriminating the unlike, and thereby ultimately obtaining a helpful synthesis which might lead to sounder constructive interpretation? Legrand, in his *Daos*, has made a notable attempt to co-ordinate some important facts, but many problems remain either untouched or, if handled at all, only blurred by the shadow of the Euripidean theory. The results would not be startling; many difficulties would remain unsolved; the neatness and despatch of recent dissection, which removes the excrescences of Roman botchwork from the sound body of Euripidean *Kunst*, would be wanting; but we should at least be starting from a very proper confession of ignorance instead of from a mere theory that is supported, in large part though not wholly, by various weak hypotheses.

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¹ Cf. Wilamowitz, *Sitzb. der. berlin. Akad.* (1911), 485.

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